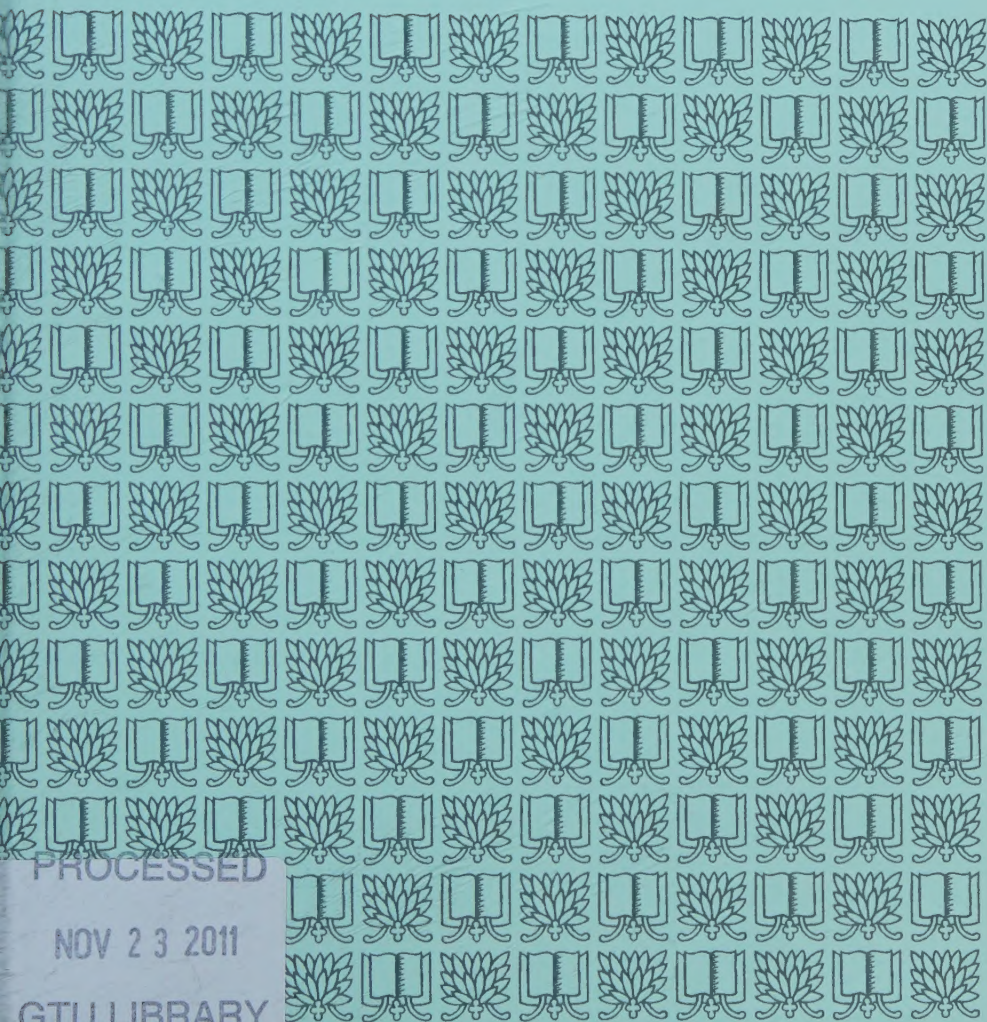


Volume 29
Issue 3
2011

IRISH BIBLICAL STUDIES



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IRISH BIBLICAL STUDIES

VOLUME 29, ISSUE 3, 2011

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF

REV PROF. STANLEY MCIVOR

B.A.,BD., PH.D

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Guest Editor

Rev. Principal Patton Taylor MBE.

Esther, Ideological Criticism, and the Theology of Liberation

Professor J. Patton Taylor

Itumeleng Mosala was one of the most significant exponents of the African *Theology of Liberation* movement in the closing years of the twentieth century. Typical of his ideological-critical work is a reading of Esther 'from the ideological perspective of a revolt of the black, feminist, South African reader', resisting the more simplistic liberation-theology hermeneutics. Having offered a critique of Mosala's analysis, I offer an alternative ideological-critical reading, beginning with the premise that Esther is to be viewed primarily as satire and comedy. The first of Mosala's 'objections' to the text is that Esther affirms 'feudal tributary' values. On my reading, the book is a biting satire against the ideological absurdities of such a system. Mosala's second objection is that Esther is a mere 'survival text', whereas I maintain that the book offers an ideological critique of the 'pre-emptive strike'. Thirdly, Mosala objects to Esther as a 'patriarchal text' - whereas in fact, the text pokes a lot of satirical fun at pompous protestations of male supremacy. My overall conclusion is that there is much in the message that could well engage with the religious-political situations of conflict in the contemporary world.

Itumeleng Mosala was one of the most significant exponents of the African *Theology of Liberation* movement in the closing years of the twentieth century. Typical of his ideological-critical work is 'The Implications of the Text of Esther for African Women's Struggle for Liberation in South Africa',¹ a reading of Esther 'from the ideological perspective of a revolt of the black, feminist, South African reader'.²

The thoroughly political nature of the Bible, maintains Mosala, is evidenced above all else by the way in which it has been used to

¹ Itumeleng Mosala, 'The Implications of the Text of Esther for African Women's Struggle for Liberation in South Africa', *Semeia* 59 (1992), pp. 129-137.

² Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', pp. 129-30.

bolster up Apartheid.³ The white liberal-humanist agenda has traditionally countered this use of the Bible not by expressing fundamental disapproval of biblical texts, such as the conquest texts, but simply by contesting the *interpretation* of texts by Apartheid ideologues. The debate was thus dominated by 'a hermeneutics of textual or authorial collusion / collaboration rather than by one of struggle or revolt'. This inevitably alienated black people, 'as their reality constantly contradicted their supposed inclusion in the biblically based love of God'.⁴

Mosala begins the article by maintaining a distinction between the phrase, *Theology of Liberation*, on the one hand and *Liberation Theology* on the other. The latter (in Mosala's usage) refers to the specific Latin American form of the former, associated with the names of activist scholars such as Segundo, Gutiérrez, Assmann, and Bonino. However, the broader expression, *Theology of Liberation*, is generic. It denotes a much wider 'movement of Third World people involved in a struggle to break the chains of cultural-religious imperialism that help to perpetuate their political and economic exploitation'.⁵ The use of the narrower phrase, *Liberation Theology*, to apply to all theologies of poor and oppressed peoples involves a form of 'discourse imperialism', in that it tends to subsume them all under the Latin America version, a mistake often made by white radical people who ideologically 'identify more with the European descendants of Latin America than with Third World people'.⁶

³ Mosala contends: 'No other political or ideological system in the modern world ... derives itself so directly from the Bible' (Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 130).

⁴ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 130.

⁵ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 129.

⁶ Mosala quotes from Cornel West: 'For oppressed coloured peoples, the central problem is not only repressive capitalist regimes, but also oppressive European civilising attitudes. And even Marxists who reject oppressive capitalist regimes often display oppressive European civilising attitudes towards coloured peoples (Cornel West, 'The North American Blacks' in S. Torres and J. Eagleson [eds.], *The Challenge of Basic Christian*

It was not until the closing years of the twentieth century that 'revolutionary reading practice became an integral part of the social insurgency of the black masses'.⁷ Black Theology became part of the 'Revolt of the Reader' movement, summed up by Terry Eagleton (the father-figure of Marxist-based Ideological Criticism in the UK) in these words:

That readers should be forcibly subjected to textual authority is disturbing enough; that they should be insultingly invited to hug their chains, merge into empathetic harmony with their oppressors, to the point where they befuddledly cease to recognise whether they are subject or object, worker, boss, or product is surely the ultimate opiate.⁸

As part of this process, the question of the *Black Feminist Theology of Liberation* has been firmly established as a high priority on the theological agenda in South Africa. Mosala therefore turns to the implications of the book of Esther for the Black African women's struggle. His analysis sets out to be in the *Revolt-of-the-Reader* tradition, resisting the more simplistic liberation-theology hermeneutics. He seeks to 'contend against the "regimes of truth" of these traditions as they manifest themselves in the text of the Bible itself'.⁹ The Black African Women's struggle takes the form simultaneously of gender, national, and class struggle. It follows that

Communities: Papers from the International Ecumenical Congress of Theology, 1980 [Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1981], pp. 255-257 (256).

⁷ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 131.

⁸ Terry Eagleton, *Against the Grain: Essays 1975-85* (London: Verso, 1986), p. 182. See Mosala's later article, 'The Politics of Debt and the Liberation of the Scriptures', in Roland Boer (ed.), *Tracking The Tribes of Yahweh* (JSOT Supp. 351; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), pp. 77-84, in which Mosala builds further on Eagleton's concept of the 'revolt of the reader'.

⁹ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 132. The phrase 'regimes of truth' is a quotation from Cornel West, 'The Dilemma of the Black Intellectual', *Cultural Critique* 7 (1985), pp. 109-124 (120).

hermeneutics of liberation for an African women's struggle should simultaneously consist of *human*, *African*, and *feminist* hermeneutics.¹⁰

Mosala distances himself from preoccupation with questions of Esther's canonicity, historicity, and 'irreligiosity'. He accepts what he regards as the prevailing scholarly view that the story is 'novelistic', originating in the Maccabean-Hasmoenean era. However, he contends that traditional scholarship consistently fails to draw the *ideological* implications of historical and literary studies. This is because scholarship is often in *ideological collusion* with the text.¹¹ The task of Ideological Criticism, argues Mosala, is not simply to *explain* the story, nor even just to supply what is 'not said' in the text. In Terry Eagleton's words, criticism must 'install itself in the very incompleteness of the work ... to explain the ideological necessity of the "not-said", unmasking the 'unconsciousness of the work – that of which it is not, and cannot be aware'.¹²

The first question to be posed in classic (Eagletonian) Marxist Ideological Criticism is to determine the 'mode of production' and / or social formation dominant in the society from which the text emerges. Mosala, intriguingly, begins his analysis by describing Esther 1 as 'a fairly straightforward descriptive text', noting that the social formation implied by the text involves a tributary mode of

¹⁰ Such a hermeneutic has a threefold task:

It will be *polemical* in the sense of being critical of the history, the culture, the ideologies, and the agendas of both the text and itself; it will be *appropriative* of the resources and victories inscribed in the biblical text as well as its own contemporary text; it will be *projective* in that its task is performed in the service of a transformed and liberated social order (Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 134).

The italicised terms are taken by Mosala from Terry Eagleton, *Walter Benjamin: or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism* (London: Verso, 1981), p. 113.

¹¹ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 132 (my emphasis).

¹² Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 133, quoting from Terry Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology: A Study of Marxist Literary Theory* (London: New Left Books, 1976), p. 89.

production. The depiction of Vashti portrays 'the private property character of the sexuality of the king's wife'. Indeed, for Mosala, 'the fundamental problematic of this chapter, as indeed of the whole text of Esther, is the gender structuring of politics'. Mosala 'objects' to the ideology of the book of Esther on three fronts: Esther is a 'feudal-tributary text', a 'survival text' and a 'patriarchal text'.

A Feudal-Tributary Text . The exploitation associated with the feudal-tributary system represented in the book is represented (as often for the Ideological Critic) by the 'not-saids' of the text. *Explicit* is the squandering of surplus production on luxury goods by the ruling classes. However, *implicit* and 'not said' is that the description of this wasteful expenditure:

... functions to obscure the social relations of production on which this consumptionist practice is premised. It mystifies the fact that behind these luxurious goods and extravaganzas lie exploited, oppressed, and dispossessed peasants, serfs, and sub-classes. This text which is otherwise excellent in its provision of socio-economic data is *eloquent by its silence* on conditions and struggles of the non-kings, non-office holders, non-chiefs, non-governors, and non-queens.¹³

It *may* be that Esther has functioned as a justification for ruling class extravagance at the expense of exploited underclassess. Modern readers who suffer oppression may, therefore, locate themselves in the 'not-saids' of the text as a radical reading strategy. However, Mosala's claim that the text offers us 'excellent provision of socio-economic data' for the world of the Persian Empire must be questioned. If Esther is a *novelistic* account, as Mosala asserts, then, presumably, the implied exploitation of Persian sub-classes is as fictional as the luxurious exploits of the ruling classes.

A Survival Text . For Mosala, Esther 'suggests a pure survival strategy, which is not underpinned by any liberative political

¹³ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 134 (my emphasis).

ideology'. This 'ideological capitulation' is summed up in these terms:

The price that the oppressed must pay for this turn of events favourable for them is at least two-fold. Firstly the oppressed must be seen to have bought heavily into the dominant ideology. ... Secondly ... the survival of the group is achieved ... by the alienation of Esther's gender power and its integration into the patriarchal structures of feudalism.¹⁴

Mosala comments on the thrice repeated statement in Esther 9 that the Jews did no looting: 'this principle of upholding the sanctity of property over the life of people is well known as part of ruling-class ideology'. However, against Mosala, the motive in the text for abstinence from looting was not to do with an ideology of private property. It was to underscore the text's claim that the killing took place as legitimate self-defence, not motivated by material gain. The text is seeking to credit the Jews with respect for the sanctity of life: taking life is permissible in self-defence, but not in the pursuit of property gain.

Interestingly, Mosala at this point misses the opportunity to engage the text with contemporary issues of the legitimacy or otherwise of revolutionary violence.

A Patriarchal Text. Mosala seems uncertain whether the text expresses approval of Vashti's actions. On the one hand, 'the audacity of one woman unleashed the political possibilities reflected approvingly in the rest of this book'. On the other hand, there is an 'explicit condemnation of Vashti in the text', with which the African Biblical Feminist cannot collude.¹⁵ His main criticism of the book's ideology, however, is that Esther's preoccupation with *national* survival obscures issues of *gender-power*, parallel to the way in

¹⁴ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 135.

¹⁵ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 135.

which contemporary oppression of African women has been subsumed, indeed undermined, by the wider struggle against colonialist oppression. The book of Esther similarly sacrifices *gender* struggles to *national* struggles: 'it disprivileges the question of gender exploitation'.

For Mosala, there are two further objections that a biblical hermeneutics of liberation must raise against the book of Esther. Firstly is 'the text's choice of a female character to achieve patriarchal ends':

The fact that the story is woven around Esther does not make her the heroine. The hero of the story is Mordecai, who needless to say gives nothing of himself for what he gets. ... African women who work within liberation movements and other groups will be very familiar with these kinds of dynamics.¹⁶

Secondly, the discourse of Esther suppresses class issues, including the class-character of cultural practices such as the Feast of Purim:

The Feast of Purim ... is not located in class terms in such a way that proper ideological choices can be made about it. In this it is very much like many cultural practices that seem inherently autocratic in the demands they place on their people.¹⁷

Mosala, however, does not make it at all clear why he perceives Purim to be 'inherently autocratic'.

Mosala's overall conviction is that oppressed communities must liberate the Bible so that the Bible can liberate them: 'An oppressed

¹⁶ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 136.

¹⁷ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 136.

Bible oppresses and a liberated Bible liberates'.¹⁸ Liberation hermeneutics must 'raise questions of the material, ideological, and cultural conditions of production of the text' in order that 'the political issues affecting nations, women, races, age groups, and classes' may receive proper treatment.¹⁹

There seem to me to be two serious flaws in Mosala's analysis. The first arises from his insistence that liberation hermeneutics must 'raise questions of the material, ideological, and cultural conditions of *production* of the text'. This is an accepted canon of ideological-critical methodology. However, Mosala has not focussed on the conditions underlying the *production* of the text but rather on the conditions prevailing in the (in his view) fictional Persian society that the text purports to describe. There is no doubt a *connexion* between the material and social conditions described (or 'not-described') in the text and the writer's contemporary social conditions. It is no doubt also true that the ideology of the writer, which arises from his /her contemporary context, may somehow be inscribed in the text's description of the past. But these are not simple connexions. A much more nuanced analysis is needed to delineate connexions between the material conditions described in the text and the conditions that gave rise to the text's production and publication.

The second flaw in Mosala's argument is indicated by his opening statement that Esther 1 is 'a fairly straightforward descriptive text'. In fact, Esther 1 is far from 'a straightforward descriptive text'. It could, for example, be understood as satire, perhaps even as comedy.

¹⁸ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 137, quoting from Itumeleng Mosala, *Biblical Hermeneutics and Black Theology in South Africa* (Exeter and Grand Rapids: Paternoster and Eerdmans, 1989), p. 193.

¹⁹ Mosala, 'Implications of the Text of Esther', p. 137. Mosala describes this process as the outworking of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza's 'hermeneutics of consent'. See Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Bread not Stone: The Challenge of Feminist Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon, 1984), p. 15 & *passim*.

Let me offer, by way of illustration, an alternative ideological-critical reading strategy for the book.²⁰

It is generally assumed that Ahasuerus is another name for Xerxes, though it is difficult to fit the details of the biblical story with the Xerxes of Greek or Persian sources.²¹ The Hebrew seems to connote something like King *Quiet and Poor*, an unlikely name for an all-powerful emperor. So it could be conceivably a 'nick-name' among the Jews for one or other of the Persian Emperors (or possibly even a 'stage name' for a *typical* Persian Emperor, signalling that this text was never intended to be a *straightforward* narrative-historical account).

The opening verses describe this new king as all powerful, ruling an empire from India right round to Ethiopia. Yet it quickly becomes clear that, in reality, he has no real power or control even over his own household. He does not know what is happening in his own court and those who surround him manipulate him at every stage!

²⁰ Different ideological-critical reading strategies for Esther include: M.V. Fox, *Character and Ideology in the Book of Esther* (2nd edition; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2001); and David J.A. Clines, 'Reading Esther from Left to Right: Contemporary Strategies for Reading a Biblical Text' in D.J.A. Clines, S.E. Fowl, and S.E. Porter (eds.), *The Bible in Three Dimensions: Essays in Celebration of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield* (JSOTSup. 87; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), pp. 31-52, reprinted in David J.A. Clines, *On the Way to the Postmodern: Old Testament Essays, 1968-1998* (JSOTSup. 292-293; 2 vols; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), pp. 3-22.

²¹ For example, Herodotus, the Greek historian, tells us that Xerxes' wife's name was Amestris and there is no extra-biblical record anywhere of Vashti or Esther as wives for Xerxes. It should also be noted that LXX tradition seemingly identified Ahasuerus not with Xerxes (486 –465 BCE) but with the later Emperor Artaxerxes II (404 – 359 BCE).

This seemingly all-powerful potentate turns out to be more like a dim-witted buffoon, a figure of stage comedy.

At the end of seven days of feasting, the king, well under the influence of the wine, decides to show off the beauty of Queen Vashti to the assembled men-folk. She quite justifiably makes a principled stand against being an object for male entertainment. So the king summons those whom he is accustomed to consult for 'expert opinion on questions of law and order' (1.13)! This is an excellent example of the tongue-in-cheek way in which the story is told - pointing up the absurdity of the king's obsession (though possibly true enough of the kind of thing that typically happened in the courts of ancient potentates!). The absurdity intensifies when these top jurists give their legal opinion. If Vashti is allowed to get away with it, then, within days, every woman in the empire will refuse to obey her husband! And so these pompous menfolk devise a universal proclamation *that that every man should be master in his own house* (1.19). We began with a seemingly all-powerful king who was not, in fact, in charge of anything at all and now we have this facile emphasis on male supremacy, introducing a story in which all the men are eventually controlled or manipulated by women! Even Haman does what his wife tells him! Men cause all the problems in the story and a woman solves them. This is the very stuff of satire, as is the choice of the new Queen Esther, on the basis of a grand 'beauty' contest (not of course actually a beauty contest but a contest based on performance during a night in bed with the king!). The book is literary satire - not 'straightforward descriptive text'.

The two main male characters are Mordecai, the hero, and Haman, the villain. Mordecai's refusal to bow down to Haman sets in motion a chain of events that almost leads to the extermination of the Jews.

Haman is a descendant of Agag, the Amalekite ruler whom Saul had defeated in battle.²² Mordecai, a Benjaminite, is from the tribe of Saul. This may not mean much to a modern reader but any Jew would have known of the age-old biblical enmity between Israelites (particularly Benjaminites) and Amalekites (particularly Agagites).

Why did Mordecai refuse to bow down? Did he have a good *religious* reason for his refusal? Certainly, the faithful Jews would refuse to bow to any idol or image, as did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Daniel 3). But was it forbidden for a Jew to show customary respect before royal officials? The writer of Genesis did not regard it as a problem for Joseph's brothers to offer such obeisance before the Governor of Egypt²³ and throughout the Old Testament there are numerous other examples that use the same Hebrew expression for obeisance as is used in Esther.²⁴ So it is not at all clear that there was any great *religious* reason for Mordecai's behaviour. The reason was rather the 500-year-old enmity between Jews and Amalekites. Mordecai might have argued that the Amalekites were God's enemies, in order to give a semi-religious justification for his actions. But I suspect that today we would describe his behaviour as motivated primarily by racism or sectarianism, albeit under the cloak of religion (a phenomenon which those of us who live in Northern Ireland understand only too well). One might further argue that the text caricatures the behaviour of both Mordecai and Haman as displaying a typically *male* pig-headedness!

²² See 1 Samuel 15. In fact, it was Samuel who eventually killed King Agag, after rebuking Saul for not doing so.

²³ See Genesis 43.28. The same Hebrew for 'obeisance' is used in Genesis 43 as in Esther 3.

²⁴ - for example, David before Saul in 1 Samuel 24.8.

I acknowledge that my reading strategy is influenced here by my own ideological background in Northern Ireland, in which a similar cocktail of religious, political, and gender ideologies prevails and in which ancient battles (from as long ago as the period from Mordecai / Haman to Saul / Agag) are still fresh in the popular memory.²⁵ This ideological undergirding to my reading of the text parallels the claim made in Black Theology of Liberation that only those with first-hand experience of struggle can see in a text dimensions that are not otherwise been apparent.²⁶

Returning to Esther, notice how the king is persuaded to go along with Haman's diabolical plan by a promise of considerable income for the royal treasury. The kind of language used by Haman here has been used countless times across the centuries as a means of justifying persecution against minority populations (not least against Jews in many contexts across the centuries): *they keep themselves separate, they have strange customs, they do not keep our laws, and they have too much money!* Notice that the king authorised the plot without even asking who the race of people were: so it was not in fact a specifically anti-Jewish matter for the king. There is, in fact, no suggestion in the book of antagonism among the *Persians* (king or people) against the Jews – the aggression all comes from Haman, the Agagite. The extent of Haman's bitterness is vividly portrayed by the narrator. He cannot enjoy any of his wealth and power because of his personal resentment towards Mordecai. Governmental ideologies are often a masking of bitterness, hatred, jealousy, sectarianism, or racism, with deep and unconscious roots in the national *psyche*.

²⁵ For example, the annual commemoration on 12 July (a Bank Holiday) of the Battle of the Boyne from as long ago as 1690.

²⁶ However, I readily admit that, unlike Mosala, my experience is not primarily from the *underside* of struggle, though I have lived and ministered in one of Belfast's most disturbed communities at the height of the 'troubles' in the 1970s and 1980s.

In chapter 4, Mordecai manages to get word to Esther of the crisis. After initial reluctance, Esther develops the strategy that saves the day. From this point on it is no longer Esther who obeys Mordecai: Esther now gives instructions and Mordecai obeys. A woman takes control of the plot. Once Haman is exposed, Mordecai becomes 'Prime Minister'. But the problem still remains of the Haman-inspired edict for the destruction of the Jews. It is still on the statute book. Not even the king himself could change the law of the Medes and Persians.²⁷ The king casually abdicates all responsibility for the matter and it is left to Esther to undo this bizarre situation, by devising a supplementary decree authorising self-defence by the Jews. However, in the event the Jews did far more than just defend themselves. They took the opportunity to rid themselves of their enemies, killing over 75,000 people throughout the Empire. In the city of Susa, 500 were killed on the first day and then Esther is granted permission for a second day of slaughter. Not one Jew was killed, which suggests that there were few who actually tried to attack them. It was of the order of a massive 'pre-emptive strike'!

Significantly, the narrator maintains a studied 'absence' of comment on this revenge slaughter: judgment is left to the reader. Traditional interpretation assumes that the text implies approval of the actions of the Jews - and across the centuries this interpretation may well have provided an ideological undergirding for violent self-assertion in a variety of contexts, right down to the contemporary Israel-Palestine conflict (for some Israelis) and to contemporary southern Africa (for Mosala). However, if the book is primarily satire rather than 'straightforward descriptive text', it would be unwise to take this (or any) section of the story at face-value. Mordecai's refusal to bow

²⁷ It should be noted in passing that there is in fact no extra-biblical evidence for this constitutional principle that the law of the Medes and Persians could not be changed, not even by the King.

down may have appeared, at first sight, to be on religious grounds, as in the Daniel parallels, but, on closer inspection, it proved to be more to do with sectarian politics. Similarly, the revenge-slaughter may at first appear to be in same tradition of slaughter of enemies as (say) the book of Joshua but, on closer inspection, it is not at all clear that the narrator expresses approval. Certainly, there is a studied ‘absence’²⁸ of imputing any *divine* approval to the slaughter (which is significantly different from the Joshua accounts). For the Ideological Critic, ‘absence’, that which is ‘not said’, is always a hermeneutical key.

The chapter ends with the institution of the Feast of Purim. A proclamation letter from Mordecai is not enough to establish this new feast. The matter has to be confirmed by Esther, a woman, for it to be authoritative. The book, which began with a satirical parading of male supremacy, ends on a note in which a woman’s word is required as the final authority, even in religious matters (a point that Mosala appears to have missed).

The closing chapter of the book seems on the surface to be a happy-ever-after ending. However, there is a sting in the tail. The final words of the book speak of forced labour imposed on peoples of the Empire. It is surely an irony for the Jews, who traced their origins to deliverance from slavery in Egypt, that the last ‘historical’ episode in the Hebrew Bible points to ‘Prime Minister’ Mordecai’s complicity in the enslavement of others. Though the book may overall be satirical, even comic, arguably, it thus ends in tragedy. Satire or comedy as literary devices can be used to convey a serious message: satire is an ideal medium for undermining official ideology and / or suspect theology.

²⁸ This is so of the MT. The longer version of Esther in the LXX introduces a range of quite different ideological perspectives, which would make an interesting avenue for comparative ideological study.

This alternative reading leads to very different conclusions from those drawn by Mosala. The first of Mosala's three 'objections' to the ideology of the text is that Esther affirms 'feudal tributary' values. On my reading, the book is a biting satire against the ideological absurdities of such a system.

Mosala's second objection is that Esther is a mere 'survival text'. The book may well have arisen out of the survivalist ideologies of Jewish groups in the Maccabaeon-Hasmonean era. However, the book does *not* represent a 'pure survivalist ideology'. The opportunity taken by the Jews to go beyond self-defence and to make a pre-emptive strike against their enemies moves them well beyond pure survivalism. Where Mosala may well be right is that the actions of the Jews are seemingly 'not underpinned by any *liberative* political ideology'. Instead, they outpace the Persians at their own game. The same might be said of Mordecai's complicity in the enslavement of others. For those seeking to 'locate themselves in the text', there is a warning here against the tendency for the oppressed to become oppressor, a warning that is surely as relevant to Black African Liberation movements as to (say) populist uprisings in 'the Arab Spring' of 2011 or those involved in the contemporary Israel-Palestine conflict.

Thirdly, there is Mosala's objection to Esther as a 'patriarchal text', in which gender issues are subsumed and a patriarchal nationalism affirmed. But, in fact, the text pokes a lot of satirical fun at pompous protestations of male supremacy. The crisis of the plot is caused by a typically male display of sectarian pig-headedness. The problems are resolved by a woman's ingenuity, with even Mordecai adopting a position of obedience to Esther. And when it comes to the founding of the Festival of Purim, Esther's word is final. So I submit that the book has a great deal more to say on the 'gender structuring of politics' than Mosala allows.

From a feminist perspective, the book may still be open to the criticism that Esther obtains her goals by colluding with male, imperial ideology. Who is the heroine: Vashti, who takes an

uncompromising stand against an outrageous display of patriarchy, achieving nothing except banishment, or Esther, who 'plays the system', achieves her goals, and saves her people? This is a dilemma that I imagine is understood only too well by Black African women.

My point, in summary, is that if one adopts a reading strategy that does not simply assume that Esther is a 'straightforward descriptive text', the book does much to undermine, or deconstruct, feudal-tributary, survivalist, and patriarchal ideology. It may be that a more nuanced reading would enable the Black African *Woman's* perspective to be located within the core of the book itself and not just in the 'not-saids' of the text. Furthermore, there is much in the message of book that we would do well to engage with the many religious-political situations of conflict in the contemporary world.

Psalm 8

Andrew Kerr F.R.C.S.I., M.Th..

ABSTRACT. By detailed comparative analysis of Hebrew & Greek morphemes, this paper seeks firstly show that the Septuagint Translator of Psalm 8 engaged in deliberate messianic interpretation, on the basis of failed Israelite institutions, historical context and OT intertextuality, at a number of levels, and thence secondly to propose a new classification for levels of interpretation for the LXX translator of the Hebrew Psalter.

In recent years, several publications have focused on proposed theologies of the Septuagint Translator of the Psalms (hence known as STP) in the field of LXX Studies. This paper, a sequel to my unpublished M.Th. Dissertation, 'A Messianic Theology of the LXX Translator of the Psalms: a comparative study of the Greek and Hebrew Texts,'¹ is a humble attempt to contribute to this ongoing debate. My modest aims are threefold. Firstly to determine whether the translation of Hebrew Ps. 8² displays the absence or presence of messianic exegesis. Secondly to outline the criteria for identification of messianic exegesis in the Psalter. Thirdly to propose a nomenclature for levels of messianic exegesis. After some preliminary considerations, I will discuss the results of textual analysis and will state my conclusions and make recommendations for further study. I hope this essay will be a fitting tribute to Prof. Stanley McIvor from whose legacy I have benefitted indirectly.

Working Principles.

We reject narrow lexical definitions of Messianism in favour of a broader working definition, like that of Block and Collins.³ Though

¹ Henceforth denoted 'Dissertation'.

² Psalter references, unless otherwise state, are numbered according to the Greek text. Other LXX references are generally obvious from the name of the book quoted or referred to: when this is not the case, they are denoted MT or LXX for the Hebrew and Greek texts respectively. All other biblical quotations follow the MT numbering, even if the text differs, unless stated.

³ D.I. Block, 'My Servant David: Ancient Israel's Vision of the Messiah' in: R.S.Hess, M.D. Carroll R. (eds.), *Israel's Messiah In The Bible And The*

the minimalistic tendencies of Lust⁴ and Fabry⁵ are unduly cautious, and extensive messianic reworking of the Hebrew *Vorlage* by the STP in line with Schaper⁶ and Sailhamer is probable,⁷ Pietersma⁸ is correct to demand more methodological rigour from maximalists. In order to conduct this investigation I have made a number of

Dead Sea Scrolls (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), p. 23, suggests a minimal modern technical definition of 'Messiah' as a future, authoritative, redemptive, eschatological, divinely commissioned, royal saviour who establishes the Kingdom of God. A similar approach is followed by W. Kaiser, Jr., *The Messiah in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Zondervan/Paternoster, 1995), pp. 14-18 and T.D. Alexander, 'Messianic Ideology in Genesis' in: P.E. Satterthwaite, R.S. Hess and G.J. Wenham (eds.), *The Lord's Anointed*, p. 21.

⁴Lust, *Messianism*, p. 177. A quartet of objections may be raised against his thesis: he fails to subject cited texts to the methodological rigour his strong declarations demand; he does not explain why messianising tendencies should be present at one place but absent in another; his examples of demessianisation are not clear-cut; and finally, while better explained as evidence of multiple translators or Masoretic eradication, neither suggestion solves every difficulty.

⁵See 'Dissertation' pp. 8-9 for discussion of H-J, Fabry, 'Messianism in the Septuagint' in: *The Septuagint in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity: Bangor Theological Seminary Congress* (2002) (Unpublished. Obtained by e-mail correspondence [May 2005]. Address available at website <http://www.bts.edu/LXX/LXX%20Program.htm#Toc17771405>), p. 1.

⁶J. Schaper, *Eschatology in the Greek Psalter* (WUNT 2. Riehe 2; 76; Tübingen: Mohr 1995), pp. 174-175 detects "...traces of the ideas of a transcendent 'Son of Man', of a powerful political leader and of a preexistent, quasi-divine Messiah."

⁷J. Sailhamer, 'Eschatology in the Greek Psalter: Joachim Schaper', *JETS* 42:4 (1999), p. 741

⁸ See Dissertation, p. 16, for a discussion of A. Pietersma, 'Messianism and the Greek Psalter: In Search of the Messiah' in: *Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense* 53 (2004) (Prepublication e-mail correspondence [May 2005]. Available at <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~pietersm/pietersma.html>), p. 37. Yet unqualified applicability of DTS to biblical texts is questionable given uncertainty over translator presuppositions.

assumptions which are outlined in greater detail elsewhere,⁹ chief among which is that the LXX translation of the Psalms was the work of a single translator of considerable acumen and fidelity, whose literalistic *modus operandi* is revealed by systematic, interlinear comparison of Hebrew and Greek texts.¹⁰ As previously proposed, I will employ a new seven-tier classification of levels of messianic exegesis.¹¹ I will seek to avoid the pitfalls of maximalist credulity

⁹ See 'Dissertation' pp.4-20 & also a longer unpublished version of this paper, available by e-mailing its author at handrewkerr@gmail.com.

¹⁰ R.J.V. Hiebert, 'Translation Technique in the Septuagint of Genesis and Its Implications for the NETS Version', *BIOSCS* 33 (2000), p. 79. For the difficulties involved, see J. Joosten, 'Elaborate Similes - Hebrew and Greek: A Study in Septuagint Translation Technique', in: R. Sollamo and S. Sipilä (eds.), *Helsinki Perspectives on the Translation Technique of the Septuagint* (PFES 82; Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2001), pp. 225-236.

¹¹ Dissertation, pp. 134-135. A significant body of evidence leads us to anticipate messianic exegesis not only at transcriptional (level 0), verbal (level 1), phrasal (level 2), clausal (level 3) level, but also at the superscriptional, sequential and canonical levels (levels 4-6). Level 4 exegesis re-contextualises whole psalms and supplements level 0-3 interpretations. Level 5 messianisation occurs both when the position of individual psalms within the present canonical sequence provides a wider context for the psalm in question, and previous and subsequent psalms. It also occurs when the presence or absence of superscriptions influences a sequence of psalms previously regarded as non-messianic. The combined preface to the Psalter, which provides a Davidic Covenantal setting for the whole Psalter, is an example of the former (Dissertation p. 24). The latter is exemplified by the Davidisation of the Enthronement Sequence in Ps. 92-98. Level 6 interpretation occurs when the OT literature is provided with a new framework by the Greek Psalter: this is possible in light of a number of considerations: firstly, the post-exilic focus on messianic expectation, given the historical demise of Israelite institutions, particularly that of monarchy; secondly, the centrality of the Psalter to the life and liturgy of Second Temple religion; thirdly, the fact that the Psalter is 'The Tanak in Miniature', acting as both compendium of the theological traditions and historical experiences of Israel, and poetic versification of its Torah, prophecy and wisdom. While there is some justification for relegating level 6 exegesis to reception history, intertestamental, rabbinical, apostolic and

and minimalist skepticism by a “medialist” approach, alert to faint traces of messianic exegesis, yet determined to subject each claim of messianisation to rigorous scrutiny. My aim is to do this in a convincing, principled, disciplined fashion,¹² aided by DTS,¹³ giving due weight given to translator fidelity, canonical position, historical

patristic writers witness to its success in achieving the above suggested aims, which STP may well have had in mind. If refinement of this classification is needed, acknowledged interpretative omissions, additions and translations allow us to supplement the numerical classification 0-6 with letters in superscript or subscript: for example, the omission of the STP in Ps. 109:3ε-θ could be described as a level 2^o or 2_o interpretation. I will be delighted if this system of nomenclature is superseded by a more robust classification. For in-depth appraisal of the interpretative significance of canonical seams & Psalter sequence please consult G.H. Wilson, *The Editing of the Hebrew Psalter* (SBLDS 76; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1985), G.H. Wilson, ‘The Structure of the Psalter: Theological Implications of the Shape and shaping of the Book of Psalms’ in: *vol. due for publication summer 2005* (kindly made available by IVP to T.D. Alexander [May 2005]), & G.H. Wilson, ‘Use of the Royal Psalms at the Seams of the Hebrew Psalter’, *JSOT* 35 (1986), pp. 85-94.

¹²See A. Pietersma, ‘Septuagintal Exegesis and the Superscriptions of the Greek Psalter’ in: P.W. Flint and P.D. Miller (eds.), *The Book of Psalms: Composition & Reception* (SVT 99; Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005. Pre-publication. Obtained by e-mail correspondence [May 2005]. Address available online at <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~pietersm/pietersma.html>), p. 443, and A. Pietersma, ‘Messianism and the Greek Psalter: In Search of the Messiah’ in: *Colloquium Biblicum Lovaniense* 53 (2004) (Prepublication obtained by e-mail correspondence [May 2005]. Address available at website <http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~pietersm/pietersma.html>), p.2 . In *Messianism*, p. 37, fearing confusion of text transmission and text reception Peterson asserts: “What Septuagint Studies needs is a theory of translation as a basis for principled exegesis of the LXX as produced.” Unqualified applicability of DTS to biblical texts is, however, questionable given uncertainty over translator presuppositions.

¹³Pietersma, *Superscriptions*, pp. 444-450. J.W.M. Wevers, ‘Text History and Text Criticism of the Septuagint’, in: *Congress Volume Gottingen 1977* (SVT 29; Leiden: Brill, 1978), p. 401.

context, messianic milieu & both retrograde & antegrade intertextuality.

Textual Analysis

Analysis of morphology,¹⁴ lexicography,¹⁵ (including nominals¹⁶ and verbals¹⁷), and structure (articles¹⁸ and prepositions¹⁹) of Ps. 8²⁰ reveals an isomorphic translation adhering strictly to the source text (in line with STP's *modus operandi*)²¹ and several *foci* of exegetical interest upon which the ensuing discussion will concentrate.

¹⁴The general pattern revealed by DTS is that of a one-to-one isomorphic translation of the Hebrew into Greek, in which quantitative considerations take precedence over qualitative concerns.

¹⁵As a rule, full Hebrew lexemes are translated into Greek by stock equivalents in a generally predictable (though not necessarily semantically identical), exegetically insignificant fashion. Exceptions are κατεστησας v7aβ, failure to render ׀ in v8aε, and other minor differences which can be accounted for on the basis of style, clarification or emphasis.

¹⁶The absence of nominals suggests deviation from STP's *modus operandi*.

¹⁷See later comments on verbals, pp. 26 ff.

¹⁸The definite article appears five times in the Hebrew in v1ε, v2aiiu, v2bθ, v9aι, v10iιι and on each occasion is represented by the Greek article. Twenty-one times the Greek article is supplied where it is formally absent in the Hebrew, in a syntactically predictable fashion, in v1aι, v2aβ, v2aiiγ, v2biiγ, v3aκ, v3bα, v4aγ,θ, v5bα, v7aε,θ, v7bδ, v8bδ,η, v9aα,γ,η, v9bα, v10aiβ and v10aiiγ. The only noteworthy use is in the superscription v1β, which is addressed above, pp. 10ff.

¹⁹See comments on use of preposition ὑπερανω, a rare translation equivalent, pp. 28 ff.

²⁰Regrettably, due to printing constraints, it was impossible to include the table of the parallel morpheme maps for Psalm 8, originally attached as Appendix 2 to my 'Dissertation.' This can be obtained from the author by email at handrewkerr@gmail.com.

²¹This strict pattern of morpheme equivalence pervades the Psalter, as our textual study shows, with the exception, perhaps, of Ps. 2, where it is less marked, and of atypical verbal and clausal translations. It is hard to square

Level Four-Six Exegesis: Superscription Material.

In another place I have given a brief synopsis of superscription material in the LXX Psalter and supplied a considerable body of evidence that indicates messianic exegesis with respect to historical notices, authorship and ‘liturgical’ headings.²² It is unsurprising, then, to find that Psalm 8 commences with a perplexing superscription for whose explanation, to date, scholarly consensus is lacking,²³ namely the rendering of מַנְצֵחַ by εἰς τὸ τέλος.

Several possible explanations have been advanced. Some suggest mistranslation. This assumes uncertainty, confusion or incompetence on the part of STP in rendering what was originally a liturgical note of considerable antiquity.²⁴ While this would match the hesitation with which other terms in superscriptions are regarded, this is unlikely given the translator's demonstrable linguistic competence,²⁵

this with T. Muraoka, ‘Pairs of Synonyms in the Septuagint Psalms’ in: R.J.V. Hiebert, C.E. Cox and P.J. Gentry (eds.), *Old Greek Psalter*, p. 43, whose negative assessment is due to his “..relatively small database.”

²²Dissertation, pp. 123-131.

²³See H-J. Kraus, *Psalms 1-59* (trans. H.C. Oswald; A Continental Commentary; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), pp. 29-30, for a summary of the state of the present debate.

²⁴P.C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50* (WBC 19, Waco: Word, 1983), p. 33 remarks “it may simply indicate a lack of musical or liturgical knowledge on the part of the translators or the lack of equivalent or appropriate terminology in the Greek language.” Similarly Pietersma, *Superscriptions*, p. 462, rather dogmatically, rejecting the view of Rosel, states as “observable facts” firstly, the failure to understand the Hebrew musical term; secondly, the STP erroneously derived it from ‘wine-press’; thirdly, by mixing up the *matres lectiones*, he viewed it as plural; fourthly, an isomorphic rendition. Unfortunately Pietersma confuses opinion and assumption with observation. He fails to take into account the evidence noted above, completely disregarding the metaphorical use of winepress in other biblical texts, which both predate and postdate the LXX. This is prejudiced minimalism.

²⁵H.M. Orlinsky, ‘The Septuagint as Holy Writ and the Philosophy of the Translators’, *HUCA* 46 (1975) pp. 89-114. On p. 109 he argues for the

and his familiarity with temple liturgical practices,²⁶ which he correctly interprets elsewhere. Selection of approximate liturgical equivalents was well within his capabilities.

Others assume literal translation.²⁷ In this case, being ignorant of the meaning of לַמְנוּחָה, STP left the interpretative decision to readers by representing each Hebrew element of the superscription by an equivalent Greek morpheme, namely an inseparable preposition לַ, a participial marker of the substantive מְנוּחָה, and a trilateral root נָח. While this harmonises with the *modus operandi* of the STP, two obvious points militate against this solution. Firstly as it stands εἰς το τέλος is good Greek which makes perfect sense.²⁸ Secondly τέλος means ‘end.’²⁹

excellence of the LXX with respect to the MT for six reasons, namely it was written by Jews for Jews, it was translated on the principle of verbal equivalence, by a single author, from a fixed *Vorlage*, in a single milieu, using a canonical text.

²⁶For example Ps. 94:1, a liturgical addition and Ps. 28:1 & 29:1, which are liturgical notes. See also Schaper, pp. 131-133. For an negative assessment, see Pietersma, *Superscriptions*, p. 462.

²⁷This is a feature of both the STP and LXX in general. So Orlinsky, p. 106, as morpheme mapping confirms.

²⁸The meaning of the phrase itself does not pose an insurmountable problem. The difficulty comes when we try to ascertain what it signifies in the context of the psalm superscriptions, particularly when considered in relation to its Hebrew *Vorlage*. I sense that a major obstacle has arisen precisely due of a failure to take the Greek, as it stands, on its own terms. If we simply try to understand εἰς το τέλος on its own terms, then the choice of the translator becomes easier to vindicate.

²⁹J.H. Thayer, ‘Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Complete and Unabridged. Electronic Edition of International Bible Translators Inc. 1998-200. Formatted and Modified by M.S. Bushell 2001)’ in: M. Bushell and M.D. Tan (eds.), *Bible Works for Windows 5.0* (Bigfork, MT: Hermeneutica, 2001), gives the meaning of τέλος in one of four principal senses: the end limit or termination at which a thing ceases to be; the end of a series or last in succession; the end, close or issue by which something is finished; the end, goal, or purpose to which all things relate. While in the

Finally this demonstrates interpretation. The translation 'to/for the end' may be a musical expression 'play to the end or the song,'³⁰ or betray messianic prognostication regarding the eschatological period 'for the end of time, for the period of the last days, for the fulfillment of all things' or an eschatological person 'for the end-time person, Christ, or Davidic King.' Several considerations favour messianic exegesis.

For a start, this eschatological nuance is well recognised in the LXX, contemporaneous Jewish Apocalyptic writings and New Testament.³¹ When the LXX Psalter utilises the phrase εἰς τέλος outside the superscriptions, it always means 'to/for the end or forever.'³² STP flexibility in the insertion/omission of the Greek definite article, when it suits his purpose, has been noted elsewhere. It therefore appears that while, in this instance, this phrase is anarticular, there is every indication that the translator intended the superscription to be

classical period τέλος was always used to describe the termination of some act or state and never of a period of time (τελευτη), the temporal use is frequently used, both of the time period (2 Ki. 8:3, Neh.13:6, 1 Cor. 10:11), and, by extension, the one who terminates it (Rom. 10:4). The nuance of meaning is determined by context. See also G. Delling, 'telos' in: *TDNTA*, pp. 1161-1166, for a comprehensive survey of τέλος and related words.

³⁰The principal difficulties are, firstly, that there would have been better ways of signifying 'musical finale/climax,' especially since the STP is capable of paraphrastic clarification elsewhere, and, secondly, a lack of biblical and extrabiblical parallels.

³¹Delling, p. 1161, notes that εἰς τέλος can mean "forever" in the LXX, while in the NT τέλος signifies "the eschatological end or conclusion."

³²Ps. 9:1, 7, 19, 32; 12:1,2; 16:11; 17:1,30; 43:1,24; 48:1,10; 51:1-7; 67:1, 7; 73:1,3,10,11, 19; 76:1,9; 78:5; 89:46; 102:9. Notice the comment of G.H. Wilson, *Psalms Vol. 1* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), pp. 80-81, who concedes "The rather standard instruction 'To the director' is translated εἰς το τέλος ('To the end [of time]'). Unfortunately, Wilson regards this translation as a mistake.

interpreted temporally, eschatologically or messianically. This is not the "closed Greek-Hebrew equation" that Pietersma thinks!³³

Next, Psalm 17 confirms our suspicion. This phrase in question crops up in v. 1 and again in v. 36. The context is important. The psalm celebrates deliverance of David and his royal descendants from his foes. The occurrence of horn v3, enemies v4, 18, 38, 41 and 49, two ways motif v22-23, refuge v31, insurrection of foreign nations v44-46 & 48, king v51a, anointed v51b, David and his seed v51c, unites this psalm semantically and theologically with the combined preface (see Dissertation pp. 23-25). This points to an eschatological, messianic superscription.³⁴

Moreover, assuming that its Hebrew *Vorlage* predates the LXX psalms, Daniel 9:24 (LXX) bolsters such a view.

ἐβδομήκοντα ἑβδομάδες ἐκρίθησαν ἐπὶ τὸν λαόν σου καὶ
ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν Σιών συντελεσθῆναι τὴν ἁμαρτίαν καὶ
τὰς ἀδικίας σπανίσαι καὶ ἀπαλεῖψαι τὰς ἀδικίας καὶ
διανοηθῆναι τὸ ὄραμα καὶ δοθῆναι δικαιοσύνην αἰώνιον
καὶ συντελεσθῆναι τὸ ὄραμα καὶ εὐφραναι ἅγιον ἅγιον

Two things can be said. Firstly the phrase 'the Most Holy' or 'Holy of holies' may or may not be Messianic.³⁵ Secondly the use of the

³³Pietersma, *Superscriptions*, p. 468.

³⁴The only serious objection to this view would be the use of this phrase in the superscription of Ps. 51:1. In what sense could David's experience of forgiveness be pointing to an eschatological or messianic reality? Given the promised of redemption from sin (Gen. 3, Ps. 129), the Levitical atonement system of Temple worship, suggestive prophetic passages (Isa. 53, Zec. 13:1) and the decline in the monarchy and Temple worship, it is not hard to understand that, by this time, many within post-exilic Judaism were looking forward to spiritual deliverance. Perhaps all these biblical and historical OT influences were brought to bear on the translation of the Psalter.

³⁵J. Goldingay, *Daniel* (WBC 30: Dallas: Word, 1989), p. 229. The evidence is ambiguous but cannot be ruled out *a priori* on semantic or syntactical grounds.

συντελεω word-group is regularly employed by Daniel in eschatological and messianic passages, and can be synonymous with τελεω elsewhere,³⁶ as Schaper has also noted.³⁷ It is not surprising to find, that in Ps. 7:10, a cry for enemy resistance to be brought to an end, employs this same word group, in a deviation from his *modus operandi* which is therefore exegetically significant.³⁸ While the Greek text of Daniel postdates the LXX Psalter, it reflects theological convictions probably current, at least in embryonic form, at the time of the translation of the latter. In light of other postulated intertextual connections between the Daniel and the LXX Son of Man theology, we suggest that our translator has deliberately interpreted this superscription in a messianic and eschatological fashion. Given the fact that Daniel chs. 7-12 share a similar orientation, it seems that this translation choice was based on Danielic intertextuality, which undergirded his own convictions. Was this consistent with the original viewpoint of the Hebrew *Vorlage* or

³⁶Dat. 11:13 reads “καὶ ἐπιστρέψει βασιλεὺς τοῦ βορρᾶ καὶ ἄξει ὄχλον πολλὸν ὑπὲρ τὸν πρότερον καὶ εἰς τὸ τέλος τῶν καιρῶν ἐνιαυτῶν ἐπελεύσεται εἰσόδια ἐν δυνάμει μεγάλῃ καὶ ἐν ὑπάρξει πολλῇ.” Clearly εἰς το τέλος is synonymous with κατα συντελειαν and so unarguably acts as a temporal, eschatological marker, in line with Delling, p. 1163.

³⁷Schaper, pp. 65-68 & 143-152.

³⁸The LXX reads συντελεσθήτω δὴ πονηρία ἁμαρτωλῶν καὶ κατευθυνεῖς δίκαιον ἐτάζων καρδίας καὶ νεφροὺς ὁ θεός. This is exegetically significant as a word search of the LXX occurrences of the verb in question confirms: Gen. 2:1f; 6:16; 17:22; 18:21; 24:15, 45; 29:27; 43:2; 44:5; 49:5; Exod. 5:13f; 36:2; 40:33; Lev. 16:20; 19:9; 23:22, 39; Num. 4:15; 7:1; Deut. 26:12; 31:1, 24; 32:23, 45; 34:8; Ps. 7:10; 118:87). The stock Hebrew equivalent of συντελεω is כָּלָה which is employed on all but five out of twenty-seven occasions in the LP (three times the STP does not use a verbal equivalent and once each it renders the verbs מָלֵא and חָנַם. Never elsewhere in the LP or LPs is it used as an equivalent of גָּמַר as it is in Ps 7:10. This Hebrew verb occurs on four other occasions in the MT Psalter, namely Ps. 12:2, 57:3, 77:9 and 138:8 where it is translated by the Greek verbs ἐκλείπω, ἐνεργειρω, ἀποκοπτω and ἀνταποδιδωμι.

did he superimpose his theology without adequate foundation? A possible solution is found through detailed morpheme analysis.

What is the function of נָזַח? נָזַח has three basic grammatical functions in biblical Hebrew namely partitive, comparative and participial.³⁹ Since participles can have verbal or substantival uses, and the STP equivalent is an articular noun, a substantival function is probably intended.

What, then, is the meaning of the triliteral root נָזַח? Generally this has been given a primary verbal meaning 'to excel' and only by extension 'to superintend,' hence the derivative noun 'the superintendent or director' with music/choir implied, thus 'choirmaster.'⁴⁰ Kidner confidently asserts "If the economy of hypothesis is its strength, the familiar translation has little to fear from alternatives."⁴¹ There is certainly little to be feared from Mowinckel's suggestion 'to dispose God to mercy.'⁴² Yet we should not overlook the alternative primary definition 'to be preminent or

³⁹P. Kelly, *Biblical Hebrew: An Introductory Grammar* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), p. 30 & pp. 193-202.

⁴⁰Eerdmans, cited by D. Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, p. 40, identifies this overseer as a musical director of labour gangs and ark processions. Similarly see also Delling, p. 1161, who gives the meaning as 'for the cultus' as a clear reference to the performance of divine worship.

⁴¹D. Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, p. 40, who notes the suggestion of Briggs that a collection of psalms drawn from separate sources and choirs was compiled for the choirmaster, probably for use on special occasions, possibly at a stage towards making the complete Psalter. Craigie, p. 34, suggests that the wide distribution of this title indicates that this collection overlaps with others and it may have been "...a collection based on the already completed Psalter or approximately contemporary with a final compilation of the Psalter."

⁴²S. Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 vols; trans. D.R. Ap-Thomas; Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), vol 2, p. 212.

enduring.⁴³ Three domains of meaning of the triliteral root, in its nominal form, have been purported, namely, 'luster or glory', 'lastingness or perpetuity', and 'success.'⁴⁴ Collins argues that the last does not exist and the first fits into the second. "Contextually some element related to everlastingness suits the passages and may be provisionally accepted as the proper interpretation." He cites 1 Sam. 15:29, 1 Chr. 29:11 and Lam. 3:18 to support his assertion. While admitting Collins definition, allowance must be made for difficult passages⁴⁵ where 'outcome' or 'end' is in view. This leaves us with ideas of 'supervision' or 'termination.' Perhaps these two ideas can be synthesized. Since an overseer is employed to insure the task in hand reaches its desired goal, a director always has the end in view. It is not without significance that on several occasions outside the psalms, לַמְנַחֵם is translated as a temporal marker.⁴⁶ All of this indicates that the STP correctly translated this superscription, as a substantival participial form of the verb, with a chronological

⁴³See *BDB*, p. 663 which notes that, by extension, the piel form of the triliteral root נָצַח means 'to act as overseer, superintendent or director' of the first temple building, second temple ministry and third temple liturgy. Note similarly D.W. Baker, 'נָצַח' in: *NIDOTTE* (Vol. 3), p. 138, who takes the inseparable preposition to mean, 'over,' and enlists the help of Aramaic cognates and Intertestamental literature.

⁴⁴C.J. Collins, 'נָצַח/נִצְחָה' in: *NIDOTTE* (Vol. 3), pp. 139-140.

⁴⁵P. Treblico, 'נָצַח' in: *NIDOTTE* (Vol. 3), pp. 141. This best explains the juice-blood metaphor in Isa. 63:3-6.

⁴⁶By εἰς τὸ τέλος in Job 14:20, 20:7 and 23:7, by εἰς τὸ αἰῶνα in Isa. 13:20, 28:28, 33:20, 34:10, 57:16 and Jer. 3:5, 50:39 (all LXX).

meaning.⁴⁷ Such a view is reinforced by the later translation of Habbakuk which employs this phrase in a remarkable fashion.⁴⁸

What was the theological motive behind this translation? While it may simply have been linguistic,⁴⁹ anti-liturgical,⁵⁰ or pro-theological,⁵¹ the main purpose was probably to promote a messianic understanding of the Psalter. In favour of this, firstly the Greek translation was made against the background of a defunct priesthood

⁴⁷In this matter Delekat, cited by Kidner, *Psalms 1-72* (TOTC; Downers Grove/Leicester: IVP, 1975), p. 40, is more perceptive than most. He suggests that εἰς το τέλος translates what was originally a responsive liturgical phrase 'evermore', akin to a choral amen. However this, he believes, was later misinterpreted as a reference to 'the excellent one' who wrote the psalm, which led, in turn, to identification with David, Asaph and others.

⁴⁸It is remarkable that Hab. 3:19 not only translated the Hebrew 'to the end' with the Greek verb συντελεω but also puts it in the middle of the verse, seemingly to prevent any confusion that it might be a liturgical designation. Furthermore, comparison with the MT of Ps. 18:33 and Ps 29:9 and their Greek equivalents, confirms what we have noticed elsewhere. The text of Hab. 3:19 reads κύριος ὁ θεὸς δυνάμεις μου καὶ τάξει τοὺς πόδας μου εἰς συντέλειαν ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ ἐπιβιβᾷ με τοῦ νικῆσαι ἐν τῇ ὁδῇ αὐτοῦ and is the STP's rendition of וַיִּשֶׁם רַגְלִי כְּאַיִלּוֹת וְעַל בְּמוֹתַי יִרְכָּבֵנִי לְמִנְצָה בְּנִינּוֹתַי יְהוָה אֱדֹנִי חִלִּי.

⁴⁹In other words the STP simply reflected, as accurately as possible, the Hebrew text before him.

⁵⁰With the historical, moral, and spiritual failure of the Temple institutions, the LXX translators were anxious to direct readers away from the cultus. Against this we note a deep commitment to Palestinian Judaism within the Hellenised Jews, so Olofsson, p. 3, & many references to temple worship which appear as insertions in LXX superscription material, notably Ps. 92:1, 93:1, 94:1 & 95:1. However, the main aim, as G.H. Wilson, *Structure*, p. 14, suggests, is not to highlight Temple institutions but stress the abiding nature of the Davidic covenant.

⁵¹In other words, studied reflection on the Psalter in the synagogues of Alexandria was considered, by STP, to be of more benefit than speculation regarding liturgical directions of a crumbling Temple institution.

and crippled monarchy. A messianic figure who could bring in the eschaton, establish the Kingdom, and restore true Worship, was required. Secondly we notice that this superscription is frequently set side by side with **דוד**. The solution to the current crisis, provided by the STP, is the promised Davidic Messiah. Thirdly we have already noted the clear intention in the opening preface of the LPs to messianise the Hebrew *Vorlage*. When we consider that Ps 8 is set in context of the Davidic Covenant v. 1, enemy threats v. 3, a coronation of a cosmic ruler v. 6, world subjugation v. 7-9, we need not doubt that these theological themes are intertwined with those of the preface.⁵² This brings us to the second significant portion of the superscription.

What should be made of the STPs translation ὑπερ τῶν ληγῶν? Again unsurprisingly, suggested proposals lack firm consensus. Among scholars “the meaning of **גת** is not known with any certainty.”⁵³ The LXX rendering ‘for the winepresses’ leaves us with two possibilities: either this is a mistaken or correct translation with or without messianisation.

Pietersma delineates four mistakes as “observable facts.” Firstly the translator fails to comprehend the musical terminology. Secondly the

⁵²We concur with B. Lindars (source unknown) who notes intertextual links between Pss. 2, 8 & 109.

⁵³Craigie, p. 105. It may refer to a musical instrument, a tune or setting, an historical event or person associated with the city of Gath, its Gittite natives, or the winepress or vintage. See the discussion of the term **גת** in Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, p. 41, Craigie, p. 105, Delitsch, p. 91, Terrien, p. 31, E.S. Gerstenberger, *Psalms Part 1: with an Introduction to Cultic Poetry* (FOTL 14; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 67, and H-J. Kraus, *Psalms 60-150*, p. 31. A helpful survey of pre-critical interpretations can be found in W.S. Plummer, *Psalms: A Critical and Expository Commentary with Doctrinal and Practical Remarks* (original place & publisher unknown, 1867 [GCS; repr.; Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1975]), pp. 120-121. Note also C.H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David Volume* (3 vols.; London; publisher unknown: 1861 [repr.; Peabody: Hendrickson, 1963]), pp. 82-84.

lexical derivation of Greek winepress is from Hebrew גת. Thirdly by misreading כ for ח he converts a singular noun into a plural. Fourthly his rendition is isomorphic. He further rejects the view of Rosel that the STP, influenced by the prophetic writings, took ληνος as a metaphor for a display of God's power. For Pietersma this is "interpretation ..based on ignorance" but not "exegesis or exposition" based on "a cognitive process that denied the psalms in question were 'Gittith' but had to do with wine-presses instead." Messianic ideas, he concludes, are present at text reception level only.⁵⁴

Pietersma must be challenged on a number of counts. Firstly, he provides no internal or external documentary evidence whatsoever to verify that the expression על-הגתית refers to a musical instrument, tune or song.⁵⁵ Secondly, it does not seem entirely unreasonable that the STP, along with most interpreters ancient and modern, should derive the term על-הגתית from גת, the name of the Philistine city which itself means winepress.⁵⁶ Thirdly, there are feasible explanations as to why the STP would read גתות for גת thus ח for כ. It is reasonable to suppose that the vowel letter was absent from the earlier autograph. Equally, it might be argued, on the basis of the frequent apparent interchangeability of ח in biblical Hebrew כ, or of a scribal copyist error, that it was quite legitimate to read the plural form. Further, it is

⁵⁴Pietersma, *Superscriptions*, p. 462.

⁵⁵To be sure some ancient Jewish interpreters suggest a musical term. Since nowhere, as far as I am aware, is the term cited this way in a different context, this would seem to be an unsubstantiated scholarly assumption. This in turn seems to be founded on the belief that the superscription must refer to some sort of liturgical direction, based on our knowledge of the use of the Psalter in Temple worship. But what concrete evidence is there for assuming that such a principle is relevant in connection with this particular superscription? Why do we assume that the STP was ignorant of the term? Could the charge of ignorance be laid at the door of others?

⁵⁶There is no need to resort to some imaginary lexical root when there is a perfectly feasible canonical option available whose meaning is well testified. To do so is linguistic suicide. It is far from certain that such a root has been provided from cognate languages.

not beyond the realms of possibility that הנחית is a qal passive participle form, thereby signifying 'the one who by whom the winepress will be trodden'. If this is in fact the case then there is but a short step to 'for the winepress'. Fourthly his unwarranted and sweeping rejection of Rosel is rooted in opinions which are prejudicial to careful examination of the evidence. On the other hand, other considerations affirm judicious translation.

For one thing, נח, or 'winepress', is most often found in the O.T. with a figurative meaning. "Winepress served as a ready metaphor and concrete image for Israel's writers and prophets. The vision of God treading the winepress became a powerful image of God's wrath."⁵⁷ נחית, allegedly a feminine, gentile adjective, inextricably linked with Gath, can mean 'instrument,' 'melody,' or 'winepresser.' The only convincing cognate is provided by rabbinical Aramaic where it "signifies a female wine-vat treader."⁵⁸ These facts alone suggest that the choice of the STP was more astute than many have recognised.

Further, a survey of the use of τῶν ληνῶν or 'of the winepresses'⁵⁹ in the LP⁶⁰ and Prophets,⁶¹ unearths two relevant texts. The first is Neh. 13:15. It records the indignation of Nehemiah at the breach of the Sabbath by 'grape-treading' countrymen.

בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם הָאֵתִי בִּיהוּדָה הָרִכִּים־נָחִית בַּשָּׂבָת וּמִכֻּבָּאִים הָעֲרָמוֹת

⁵⁷E. Carpenter, 'נח' in: *NIDOTTE* (Vol. 1), pp. 903-904.

⁵⁸R.H. O'Connell, 'נחית' in: *NIDOTTE* (Vol. 1), pp. 904-905.

⁵⁹It is used twenty-eight times and in eight forms in the LXX and NT (Gen. 30:38, 41; Exod. 22:28; Num. 18:27, 30; Deut. 15:14; 16:13; Jda. 6:11; Jdg. 6:11; 2 Ki. 6:27; Neh. 13:15; Ps. 8:1; 80:1; 83:1; Prov. 3:10; Sir. 33:17; Hos. 9:2; Joel 1:17; 2:24; 4:13; Isa. 63:2; Jer. 31:33; Lam. 1:15; Matt. 21:33; Rev. 14:19f; 19:15).

⁶⁰It is used on a total of six occasions to represent the nouns רִחַט, רִמּוֹנָה or רִבּ with the meaning 'watering trough' or 'winepress.'

⁶¹In these books it is used eleven times, predominantly to translate the nouns רִבּ, נח, and only once the noun מִמְּגוּרָה (granary housed together with winepress) with the same meaning.

וְעִמָּסָם עַל־הַחֲמִירִים וְאֶת־יוֹן עֲנָבִים וְחֲאֲנִים וְכָל־מִשְׁאֵא וּמִבִּיֵּאִים יְרוּשָׁלַם
בְּיוֹם הַשְׁבֹּת וְאֶעֱיֵד בְּיוֹם מִכְרָם צִיד

ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις εἶδον ἐν Ἰουδα πατοῦντας ληνοὺς
ἐν τῷ σαββάτῳ καὶ φέροντας δράγματα καὶ ἐπιγεμίζοντας
ἐπὶ τοὺς ὄνους καὶ οἶνον καὶ σταφυλὴν καὶ σῦκα καὶ πᾶν
βάσταγμα καὶ φέροντας εἰς Ἱερουσαλημ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ
σαββάτου καὶ ἐπεμαρτυράμην ἐν ἡμέρᾳ πράσεως αὐτῶν

The fact that דְּרָכִים־נְתוּחַ is translated πατοῦντας ληνοὺς indicates that the meaning of the Hebrew plural noun was well-established. It is possible that the STP mistakenly read נְתוּחַ instead of נְתוּחַ. Alternatively these forms may be near synonyms. Further comments above regarding middle root consonant interchangeability & copyist error, suggest a participial form translated ‘winepress’ by STP.

The second is Isaiah 63:2. It focuses on the coming of the eschatological redeemer in 62:12b and 63:4b.⁶²

מִדּוּעַ אָדָם לְלַבֹּשֶׁתְךָ וּבְגָדֶיךָ כְּדָרֶךְ בָּנָת

διὰ τί σου ἐρυθρὰ τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ τὰ ἐνδύματά σου ὥς
ἀπὸ πατητοῦ ληνοῦ

He is pictured in bloodstained garments 63:1-2, trampling the winepress of his anger 63:2, simultaneously judging the peoples and saving Zion 62:10-12, 63:5-6.⁶³ This can only refer to the Messianic Servant-King.⁶⁴ “The Anointed One states his wrath but does not explain or justify it ..the Anointed One cycle provides the reason: the

⁶²J.D. Watts, *Isaiah 34-66* (WBC 25; Waco: Word, 1987), p. 322 commenting on this verse, notes “redemption suggests the restoration of order that had previously existed” and the “..putting down rebellion”.

⁶³*Ibid*, p. 321, though, *contra* Watts, we do not believe him to be some “symbol of Persian imperial power.”

⁶⁴Given the clear parallel motifs of deliverance of Zion, Isa. 52:1-12, the bared arm of Yahweh 52:10, and the salvation working suffering servant of Yahweh 52:13-53:12, and his accomplished redemption 54:5, this can only refer to the Anointed Servant King.

subjection of the Lord's people to oppressive enemies must be overthrown.”⁶⁵ What we must not miss here, in both texts, is the theme of eschatological redemption through the instrumentality of a messianic saviour and judge, expressed in the winepress metaphor. Though there are a number of possible explanations as to why the STP employed the superscription equivalent ὑπὲρ τῶν ληνῶν,⁶⁶ none of them satisfies. The best contention, that this represents deliberate messianic exegesis, is bolstered by several arguments.

Firstly the phrase only occurs in LPs three times, in Ps. 8:1, 80:1 and 83:1. It is interesting that in each case the psalm is drawn from a different collection, variously attributed to the David, Korah and Asaph. This points away from liturgical directions to common themes and motifs. Secondly thematic links are not easy to find at first glance, but on closer inspection of the psalm sequence 81-84, giving full weight to canonical shape, and noting the comments of Terrien, it becomes clear that if this is indeed a messianic

⁶⁵So A.J. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah* (Leicester: IVP, 1993), p. 511. From a different perspective C. Westermann, *Isaiah 40-66* (trans. D.M.G. Stalker; OTL; London: SCM 1969), comments, p. 384, “what supremely marks off 63:1-6 from the rest of the book is the fact that it depicts the battle which annihilates the nations as one waged by a single person ..bespattered all over with blood ..The ‘nations’ form a single entity, the eschatological ‘foe’ ..the whole thing is apocalyptic.” However, we doubt this is myth!

⁶⁶Perhaps he used it as an appropriate symbol of joy. Just as the gittith was an instrument for making joyful music, so the gathering and pressing of grapes at harvest-time was a happy occasion. This is possible since change of metaphor was an accepted convention among translators around this period, according to Sollamo. Alternatively it may have been employed to indicate that this psalm was appropriate for use on joyous occasion such as the wine harvest. What better way for a wine presser to pass the time than meditating on God's goodness to man or His coming messiah. Also it may have been an attempt to divert attention away from a liturgical setting, assuming that some of his studied contemporaries knew the meaning of the term ‘gittith’ (and didn't just guess at the meaning as Pietersma and Tov suggest), given the failure of the Temple to live up to expectations and the rise of the Hasmonean dynasty.

superscription, it is well placed.⁶⁷ Further detailed analysis of this point goes beyond the scope of the present study. Thirdly, the meaning of the terms in Greek is unambiguous and clear.⁶⁸ Fourthly, if the Pentateuch was used as a lexicographical aid, there is no indication that εἰς τῶν ληνῶν was employed as a stock term in the psalms. It seems more likely to have been a term chosen for its ability to convey a theological motif. In light of DTS, this is highly significant. Fifthly, we must look at this superscription in light of what we know about the shape and intertextuality of the Psalter. Sixthly, a relecture of Psalm 8, in light of this winepress image, now begins to make better sense. Now its eschatological messianic orientation comes to the fore. While the created glory and dignity of Adamic man in his state of innocence is cause enough to celebrate, this song rings hollow in light of human sin and the demise of the Davidic line. It is hard to resist the conclusion that the STP, cognizant of this fact, employed the winepress imagery of Isaiah, and

⁶⁷Ps. 80:15-16 promises the deliverance of God's people through the eschatological subjugation of their enemies. Ps. 81:6-7 warns world leaders of the imminent destruction that awaits them unless they repent of their partiality, wickedness and unjust oppression of the weak and needy, at the final eschatological judgment, when the nations will belong to God as an inheritance 81:8. Ps. 82:3, 4-9 portrays a conspiracy between the heads of enemy nations whose overthrow, 82:9-13, pictured in O.T. metaphors (Judges 4:15 & 24, 5:21, 7:25, 8:3.), ends in eschatological judgment 82:16-18. In Ps 83:6 (note the use of singular ἀνερ) & 8 the psalmists pilgrimage to Zion is bound up with the fate of Yahweh's Anointed 83:10. As M. Tate, *Psalms 51-100* (WBC 20; Dallas: Word, 1990), p. 360, notes, referring to the MT "The most natural explanation of v10 is that the King is intended as the object of prayer ..the King was considered to be an 'extended arm' of Yahweh, who intervenes and establishes justice ..the prayer in 84:10 is for Yahweh to look with favour on the king/priest so that his reign can be established and prosper." See also the comments of Terrien, p. 601, who is open-minded about a possible eschatological interpretation "The word anointed did not originally mean an eschatological 'messiah' but referred to an anointed leader of Israel."

⁶⁸On each occasion used, it means trough, winepress, granary or a related term, by derivation, like winepresser.

the eschatological motifs of Daniel, in an attempt to bring out the messianic solution latent but inherent in the text. Bleeding grapes pulped under the winepressers feet become a fitting image of a greater Adam trampling the eschatological enemies of Yahweh. In this way the STP weaves several strands of his theology together. Zion's Messiah, David's legitimate successor, and Adam's rightful heir (Ps 8:5-6) will crush rebels (Ps 2:9-12), in His winepress of wrath (Ps. 8:3 & 7), treading on proud heads (Ps. 82:3; 109:1 & 6) in eschatological judgment (Ps. 109:6, 1:5-6, 2:12, 80:15-16, 81:8, 82:17-19).

It was natural that the NT should make these links more explicit in the rod of iron/winepress imagery of Psalm 2, 8 and 109 in Rev 14:19-20, 19:15,⁶⁹ by recourse to the LXX. Thus the LPs became a natural bridge to full-blown, NT, messianism. This was not simply a question of text reception but text transmission. STP intentionally fosters the hope of redemption generated by contemplation of the Hebrew *Vorlage* in light of intertextuality and the prevailing historical circumstances.⁷⁰

⁶⁹Rev. 14:19-20 & 19:15 read ...καὶ ἔβαλεν ὁ ἄγγελος τὸ δρέπανον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν γῆν καὶ ἐτρύγησεν τὴν ἄμπελον τῆς γῆς καὶ ἔβαλεν εἰς τὴν ληνὸν τοῦ θυμοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τὸν μέγαν. καὶ ἐπατήθη ἡ ληνὸς ἔξωθεν τῆς πόλεως καὶ ἐξῆλθεν αἷμα ἐκ τῆς ληνοῦ ἄχρι τῶν χαλινῶν τῶν ἵππων ἀπὸ σταδίων χιλίων ἑξακοσίων ...καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ ἐκπορεύεται ῥομφαία ὀξεῖα, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ πατάξῃ τὰ ἔθνη, καὶ αὐτὸς ποιμανεῖ αὐτοὺς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδηρᾷ, καὶ αὐτὸς πατεῖ τὴν ληνὸν τοῦ οἴνου τοῦ θυμοῦ τῆς ὀργῆς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ παντοκράτορος. See also 1 Cor. 15:21-28, 45-49 & Heb. 2:5-9.

⁷⁰See comments of Thomas Goodwin in Spurgeon, p83-84 "Any one that reads the Psalm would think that the Psalmist doth but set forth old Adam in his kingdom, in his paradise, made a little lower than the angels ..a degree lower, as if they were dukes and we were marquises; one would think, I say, that this were all his meaning, and that it is applied to Christ only by way of allusion. But the truth is, the apostle bringeth it in to prove and to convince these Hebrews, to whom he wrote, that that Psalm was meant of Christ, of that whom they expected to be the Messiah, the Man Christ Jesus ..This could not be Adam, it could not be the man that had this world in a state of innocency; much less had Adam all under his feet ..it was too great a

Level Five-Six Exegesis: The 'Son of Man' Reference.

We turn our attention now to Psalm 8:5, the focus of much scholarly debate, which looks, superficially, like a literal, faithful translation.

מִהֲאֵנוֹשׁ כִּי־תִחַכְּרֵנוּ יְבִן־אֲדָם כִּי תִפְקַדְנוּ

τί ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος ὅτι μιμηθήσκη αὐτοῦ ἢ υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ὅτι ἐπισκέπτῃ αὐτόν

Some have argued for a messianic interpretation while others are more cautious.⁷¹ Schaper, ignoring the “slightly unusual” translations elsewhere, marshals two pieces of evidence in favour of messianic exegesis, namely Ps. 79:16b and Num. 24:17.⁷² To this we add Dan. 7. Schaper argues for deliberate messianisation of Ps. 79:16b firstly, because of close verbal similarities with psalm 8:5,⁷³ secondly, in order to stress the messianic concept which was induced by solemn repetition, thirdly, on account of the Targumist translation ‘King Messiah’, fourthly due to the influence of the Danielic Son of Man concept, fifthly, on the basis of contemporaneous scribal hermeneutic

vassalage for Adam to have the creatures thus bow to him. But they are thus to Jesus Christ, angels and all; they are under his feet, he is far above them ..Take all the monarchs in the world. They never conquered the whole world; there never was any one man that was a sinner that had all subject to him ..So now it remaineth that it is only Christ, God-Man, that is meant in Psalm viii ..He quoteth this very Psalm which speaks of himself; and Paul, by his warrant, and perhaps from that hint, doth thus argue out of it, and convince the Jews by it.”

⁷¹Schaper, p. 76.

⁷²*Ibid*, p. 77.

⁷³*Ibid*, p. 77, argues that since פִּקַּד is combined with בֶּן־אָדָם in psalm 8:5, and with בֶּן־אָדָם in Ps. 79:18, when פִּקַּד was observed in 79:16b, it seemed reasonable to interpret נָפַל in light of psalm 8:5 under the rubric υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου.

principles,⁷⁴ and finally, because at this time such language carried messianic connotations.

Though the rewording itself is not fully persuasive we concur with Schaper for the following reasons. Firstly, as already noted, there is evidence that Danielic intertextuality influenced the STP. Secondly in addition to the need for solemnity, repetition serves to form an *inclusio*, which thereby stresses the need for God to install His King on a throne of power by way of revitalizing the Kingdom-in-crisis. Thirdly the deliberate setting of this psalm in a post-exilic context of apparent Davidic Covenant failure, as evidenced by the addition to the LXX superscription,⁷⁵ appears to be an attempt to generate messianic speculation.⁷⁶ Fourthly the references to Yahweh's 'right hand man' cannot be considered without reference to Ps. 109.⁷⁷ Fifthly given David's response to the covenant oracle,⁷⁸ the use of

⁷⁴*Ibid*, p. 98-99.

⁷⁵The LXX roots this psalm in the historical context of the destruction of Samaria by Sennacherib in 722 B.C., and therefore the post-exilic period. This trauma of exile and failure of monarchical institutions, by this time north and south of the border, sets the interpretative agenda for the STP. The Kingdom which had been divided is now decimated and soon to be destroyed. Kingship is in crisis. In light of the Davidic Covenant, his readers must look for Messiah.

⁷⁶See M. Tate, *Psalms 51-100* (WBC 20; Dallas: Word, 1990), pp. 308-312 for a discussion of diachronic (which suggest a number of pre-monarchic, pre-exilic & post-exilic contributions) and synchronic approaches (a northern or southern composition lamenting the destruction of Shiloh [pre-exilic] or Samaria [post-exilic] or failure of Josianic reforms [pre-exilic]).

⁷⁷Since Ps. 8 has close affinities with Ps. 2, which itself contains messianic exegesis, references to the right hand of Yahweh naturally conjure up the unforgettable portrayal of Messiah enthroned in power, in Ps. 109. We cannot doubt that this also, therefore, was a controlling theological factor in the translation of Ps. 79:16b. I have discussed probable messianisation at the macroscopic level in the fascinating Ps. 109. Those interested should consult pp. 68-87 of my dissertation.

⁷⁸2 Sam. 7:19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28 and 29.

δουλος may well be an intentional reference to the Davidic Line as the representatives of Israel whose fate is bound up with His. Is it beyond the bounds of credibility to postulate that STP is suggesting the need for a Son with whom Yahweh is well pleased?

In light of this it is helpful to examine Schaper's first point, namely the importance of the verb פָּקַד both in Ps. 8:5 and Ps. 79:16b. While hebraists have long recognised the difficulty in determining the precise meaning of this word, what is significant for this present discussion is that the frequently attested meaning "carefully examine, attend to, take note of, with the intention of responding appropriately ..is most often found with God as subject ..whether to bestow divine blessing or judgment."⁷⁹ It quickly becomes apparent, when its MT usage is surveyed, that the twin themes of salvation or judgment are set within a covenantal framework.⁸⁰ It would not be unreasonable to suggest that both in Ps. 8:5 and Ps. 79:16b what is in view is another divine visitation, not this time in exile, but in a second Exodus. This would be entirely in keeping with the twin themes of judgment and salvation already enunciated in the preface to the Psalter,⁸¹ and sheds light on later NT Exodus references, like Luke 9:31 and Rev. 15:1-4.

It is helpful to reappraise Ps. 8:5 in light of the prayer offered by David in response to the Nathan Covenant Oracle, recorded in 2 Sam. 7:18.

וַיִּבֹא הַמֶּלֶךְ הָדָד וַיָּשֶׁב לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אֲנִי אֲדֹנֵי יְהוָה וְמִי בֵיתִי כִּי
הִבִּיאֲתָנִי עַד-הַלֵּם

⁷⁹ T.F. Williams, 'פָּקַד' in *NIDOTTE* (Vol. 3), p. 659.

⁸⁰ One major focus is the Israelite Exodus, when Yahweh visits his people in accordance with His Patriarchal Promises. Another is the punishment of God's people in accordance with the curses of the Sinaitic covenant. See for example Gen. 50:24-25, Exod. 3:16, 4:31, 13:19, 20:5, 30:12, 32:34, 34:7, Lev 18:25, 26:16 and Deut. 5:9.

⁸¹ *Dissertation*, pp. 21-33.

καὶ εἰσῆλθεν ὁ βασιλεὺς Δαυιδ καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐνώπιον κυρίου
καὶ εἶπεν τίς εἰμι ἐγὼ κύριέ μου κύριε καὶ τίς ὁ οἶκός μου
ὅτι ἡγάπηκός με ἔως τούτων

This language, though not precisely parallel, is not far removed, in style or content, from the bold exclamations of Ps. 8:5. If the words attributed to David are a poetic rendition of his prayer of gratitude, it would be natural to understand them messianically at a later time of Covenant crisis. This is especially so given the centrality ascribed to the Davidic Covenant in the Psalms.⁸² It suggests that STP is fostering expectation of a divine salvific/judicial visitation, through the installation of the eschatological King.

Several scholars argue that Greek Num. 24:17, one of the great LXX messianic texts,⁸³ proves conclusively that ἄνθρωπος was already an established designation for Messiah.⁸⁴ However, such messianisation belongs to reception history and later interpretation.⁸⁵ Morpheme mapping and lexical analysis reveals that ἄνθρωπος is evidently little more than a stock equivalent. Cox rightly wonders “What other Greek word did we expect for אָדָם in 8.5?”⁸⁶ While the context certainly imparts a messianic flavour, also present in the Hebrew,

⁸²Note, for example, how Ps. 88 is strategically placed at the end of Book 3, a key Royal Seam, just prior to the enthronement psalms.

⁸³Schaper, pp. 117-118, citing Brownlee.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p. 118, writes on the basis of the Greek translation, Qumran, and comparison with Numbers 24:7 “..we can therefore assume that the concept of a messianic saviour figure referred to as ἄνθρωπος was firmly established in second century Judaism.” See also W. Horbury, ‘Messianic Associations of the “Son of Man”’, *JSNTS*, p. 414.

⁸⁵J. Lust, ‘The Greek Version of Balaam’s Third and Fourth Oracles. The ἄνθρωπος in Num. 24:7 and 17. Messianism and Lexicography’ in: L. Greenspoon and O. Munnich (eds.), *IOSCS Congress Volume 8, 1992* (SBLSCS 41; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), pp. 233-257.

⁸⁶C.E. Cox, ‘Schaper’s Eschatology Meets Kraus’s Theology Of The Psalms’ in: R.J.V. Hiebert, C.E. Cox & P.J. Gentry (eds.), *Old Greek Psalter*, pp. 289-311, on p. 296.

nothing indicates that the Greek reaches beyond literal rendition. While it might be argued that STP deliberately translates different Hebrew words by the same Greek equivalent for messianic purposes, this tendency is in keeping with his normal practice of eliminating variety (see comment on the double use of *δυναμις* in *Dissertation*, pp. 80-81). Messianisation must be established on firmer grounds.

Intertextuality within the Psalter is also important. A brief overview of Pss. 1-8 hints that STP intended Ps. 8 to function messianically. If we are correct in our belief that the preface to the Greek Psalter reflects messianising tendencies, then Ps. 3-7 play out, in dramatic fashion, the struggles of Messiah with his enemies, under the rubric of Davidic Kingship.⁸⁷ Ps. 8 provides a fitting conclusion to the opening sequence,⁸⁸ and elucidates later NT usage of this psalm.⁸⁹ There are also important intertextual links with other key Pss. 2 and 109.⁹⁰ All this suggests that STP intended Ps. 8 to be understood

⁸⁷This is indicated, for example, in Ps. 3, a Davidic psalm, whose subject matter is strikingly similar. Here the Christ is surrounded by hostile enemies, v2a & 8b, and people v7a, who are united, v7b, in insurrection against Him, v2b. The King is confident that when prayer is answered from God's holy hill, v5b, that his head will be elevated v4b and the wicked broken v8c (c.f. Ps. 2:1, 6, 9 & 10). While the thematic similarities are not so marked in Ps. 4, another Davidic psalm, it follows on from Ps. 3 logically, as a further expression of trust and confidence in the king's deliverance and vindication 3:3, 5 & 9 and 4:4, 6, 9. Ps. 5, again a Davidic composition, returns to the theme of hostility. Appeals are made to the heavenly King 5:3, in the holy hill 5:8c, for deliverance from enemies whose counsel of rebellion, 5:11a, directed, through the person of David, at God himself 5:11b. Ps. 6 continues the theme of Yahweh's deliverance from the enemies of the king in 6:11. Ps. 7 has the final overthrow of royal opposition in the eschatological judgment in view 7:7-10.

⁸⁸Ps. 8 can be seen as a private celebration, by the Davidic king, of the marvellous divine plan 8:2, and of the deliverance 8:3, care 8:5, humiliation 8:6a, coronation 8:6b and eschatological reign 8:7-9 of Messiah.

⁸⁹E.g. 1 Cor. 15:24-28 & Heb. 2:5-9.

⁹⁰Firstly, all three compositions derive from the Davidic corpus. Secondly, each deals with the subjugation of enemies, 2:9, 8:3 and 109:1. Thirdly, the

messianically on the basis of intertextuality. If an explanation is needed as to why the definite article is omitted in Ps. 8, a number of arguments can be marshaled. Firstly it was unnecessary given the messianised superscription. Secondly if the Son of Man was indeed considered an official designation, as Schaper argues, it was unnecessary to precede this superhuman-messianic title with a definite article. Thirdly, as noted elsewhere, STP demonstrates flexibility with his use of the article. Fourthly, and most significantly, his aim was not to conclude a search but create an expectation. Did he feel that it was inappropriate, at this juncture in Israelite history, to spell out what lay in the future and yet remained shadowy?

In summary, while conceding that 'son of man' is ambiguous, εἰς το τέλος was inserted by STP as both an eschatological marker and interpretative key, a thesis confirmed by marked intertextuality. This argues forcibly for eschatological, messianic exegesis,⁹¹ and was probably motivated by STP's understanding of the Hebrew text in light of Davidic demise, theological influences of other OT writings like Daniel, and contemporaneous messianic speculation.

Level 1 Exegesis: An Irregular Pattern of Verb Translation.

The standard method of STP is to render preformatives with future indicatives and postformatives with aorist indicatives. The pattern of treatment of verbals that emerges from LXX Psalm 8 deviates markedly from the norm. While we should be cautious about our conclusions, in view of the small sample size, the likelihood that STP translated several of these short psalms at one sitting, or within a short period, points towards exegetical significance.

rule of the Davidic king is asserted uniformly in 2:6, 8 & 11, 8:6-10 and 109:3. Fourthly, judgment also is asserted, 2:12, 109:5-6 and implied in 8:2 & 6a. Both Ps. 2 & 109 should be regarded as Messianic in Hebrew (see pp. 22 & 69) which are then further messianised by STP. The links between these Psalms were noted some time ago by Lindars.

⁹¹ I have discussed this matter at length in pp. 117-122 of my dissertation.

A good example is found in 2bβ where aorist passive ἐπηρθη replaces an imperative, though this might be expected in light of the awkward Hebrew syntax and sense. However in v3a κατηρτισω looks like an attempt to stress the certainty of messiah's election to lordship by divine decree. This verb occurs in only two books of the Hebrew canon Ezra and Psalms: in the former it carries the meaning 'to furnish or complete a decree.' In the latter, in Ps. 8:3, 10:3, 16:5, 17:34, 28:9, 39:7, 67:10, 73:16, 79:16, 88:38, it translates a variety of Hebrew verbs in a generally predictable fashion, yet on one isolated occasion renders the *Vorlage* in a surprising way, namely in 28:9.

Ps. 29:9 קול יהוה יחולל אילות יחושק יערות ובהיכלו כלו אמר כבוד:

Ps. 28:9 φωνή κυρίου καταρτιζομένου ἐλάφους καὶ ἀποκαλύψει ὄρυμους καὶ ἐν τῷ ναῷ αὐτοῦ πᾶς τις λέγει δόξαν

The rendition of Brenton “..the voice of the Lord strengthens the hinds” recognises the exegetical nature of this translation equivalent. I have argued elsewhere⁹² that this verb was selected by the STP to forge a verbal link with Ps. 17, another Davidic, theophanic, eschatological, enthronement psalm, on the basis of thematic connection with Mic. 4:12-13 and Isa. 41:15, which refer to a pulverising judgement of the enemies of God.⁹³ In the Psalter it becomes a semi-technical expression for the notion of establishment, by divine decree, of creation, church and Christ, almost invariably with the idea of permanence and certainty. Its use here, though a possible translational equivalent, is not the way the qal form of the Hebrew verb יָדַע is usually translated in the psalms: it occurs eight times, in Ps. 8:3, 24:2, 78:69, 89:12, 102:26, 104:5, 104:8, 119:15 (all MT), and seven times the STP selects θεμελιεω. While this may be simply a stylistic choice in light of the use of this same verb in v4bη, and not therefore unarguable evidence of messianic exegesis,

⁹² Dissertation, p. 55.

⁹³ *Ibid*, pp. 53-67.

at very least it supports messianisation in favourable contexts, and therefore, in context of Ps. 8, signals messianic intention.

The selection of Greek present tenses for preformatives in $\nu 5\alpha\epsilon$ $\mu\iota\mu\eta\eta\sigma\kappa\eta$ and $\nu 5\beta\epsilon$ $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota\kappa\epsilon\pi\tau\eta$ throws up two main alternatives: either it indicates flexible usage of Greek tenses as context requires, or it represents an interpretative move. This might reflect a conviction that, in light of the apparent failure of the Davidic Covenant, Yahweh has not yet finished with mankind. In other words the present tense is chosen to reaffirm the abiding, ongoing, efficacious nature of covenantal promises entrusted to Adam, Abraham and David, of a future redeemer, saviour and king.

An aorist for a waw-consecutive imperfect in $\nu 6\alpha\alpha\beta$ is as anticipated. However, the representation of Hebrew preformatives by Greek aorists in $\nu 6\beta\epsilon$ $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\epsilon\phi\alpha\upsilon\omega\sigma\alpha\varsigma$ and $\nu 7\alpha\beta$ $\kappa\alpha\tau\epsilon\sigma\tau\eta\sigma\alpha\varsigma$ looks suspiciously like a further attempt to assert the establishment of messianic rule. Firstly it is highly significant that this is precisely the same verb that the Christ uses of himself and the establishment of his reign in Ps 2:6 $\alpha\gamma$. Secondly, in the LXX Pentateuch, the qal form of משל is always rendered by $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omega$ or $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omega$, for example in Gen. 1:18, 3:16, 4:7, 24:2, 37:8, 45:8,26; Exod. 21:8; and Deut. 15:6, 28:37. Thirdly, in the Psalter, the qal form of משל , is otherwise always rendered by $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omega$ or $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\omega$ 19:14 & 106:41, $\delta\epsilon\sigma\pi\omicron\zeta\omega$ 22:29, 59:14, 67:7, 89:10, 103:19, or $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\omega$ 105:20,21 (all MT), except on this single occasion. The burden of proof rests with those who deny an exegetical move on the part of STP: it points to his firm belief that the future reign of the Israelite Messiah is assured, in line with Ps. 2:6. If this deduction is correct, it forges a verbal link between these two key Pss. 2 and 8.

Level Two-Three Exegesis: Miscellaneous Words in $\nu 2\beta\alpha-\eta$.

The STP equivalent $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\epsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omega$ $\nu 2\beta\eta$ looks promising also. Careful analysis shows that prepositions are rendered with standard Greek

equivalents in v1α,δ, v2aiiη, v2bη, v3αα, v3βα, v6αη, v7aδ, v7bγ, and v10iiη. The use of the preposition in v1β has already been discussed. The choice of ὑπερανω for על in v2bη does not appear innocent.

Firstly ὑπερανω is not a stock equivalent. This preposition occurs rarely in the LXX, only twice in the Pentateuch and three times in the Psalms. On one occasion the LXX deviates from the MT, in Ps. 73:5, though translation of the preposition is comprehensible.⁹⁴ On all other occasions it denotes the Hebrew preposition על. However, in spite of this, על occurs in the MT three thousand five hundred and sixty-seven times. Clearly ὑπερανω is a rare translation equivalent.

Secondly, ὑπερανω, when it occurs in the LP, is used in contexts that signify the promised, triumphant, glorious, exaltation of the people of God over the nations and their enemies. It occurs twenty-five times in the canonical LXX (Deut. 26:19; 28:1; Neh. 12:38f; Est. 4:17; Ps. 8:2; 73:5; 148:4; Mic. 4:1; Jon. 4:6; Hag. 2:15; Mal. 1:5; Isa. 2:2; Ezek. 8:2; 10:19; 11:22; 43:15; Dan. 3:46). Thayer, Liddel-Scott, Friberg & Louw-Nida unanimously assert that ὑπερανω implies exaltation in one of two senses, namely location or status, rank and power. While locational exaltation is certainly in view in Nehemiah & Jonah contexts, there are notable instances where the status or victory motif predominates, particularly Mic. 4:1, Isa 2:2 and, more significantly, in Deut, 26:19 & 28:1. Here it translates the ubiquitous MT preposition על, a rare LP non-stock equivalent. Review of the prophetic texts in question is informative:

Mic. 4:1 refers to the eschaton in which the messianic kingdom, as a result of international super-exaltation, will prove a magnetic attraction to Gentiles who stream to the Holy City. Isa. 2:2 speaks in parallel terms about the last days restoration of the Kingdom of God.

⁹⁴ The MT מוֹעֵדָךְ שְׁמוֹ אוֹתָתָם אֲתוֹת: יוֹדַע כְּמִבְּיָא לְמַעַלָּה בַּסֶּבֶךְ-עֵץ קִרְדֵּמוֹת of Ps. 74:4-5 is rendered καὶ ἐνεκαυχῆσαντο οἱ μισοῦντές σε ἐν μέσῳ τῆς ἑορτῆς σου ἔθεντο τὰ σημεῖα αὐτῶν σημεῖα καὶ οὐκ ἔγινωσαν ὡς εἰς τὴν εἰσοδὸν ὑπεράνω

Mic. 4:1 וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים יִהְיֶה הָר בֵּית־יְהוָה נֶכֶד בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים
וְנֶשֶׂא הוּא מִנְבֻּעֹת וְנָהָרוּ עָלָיו עַמִּים:

Mic. 4:1 καὶ ἔσται ἐπ' ἐσχάτων τῶν ἡμερῶν ἐμφανὲς τὸ ὄρος τοῦ κυρίου ἕτοιμον ἐπὶ τὰς κορυφὰς τῶν ὀρέων καὶ μετεωρισθήσεται ὑπεράνω τῶν βουνῶν καὶ σπεύσουσιν πρὸς αὐτὸ λαοί

Isa. 2:2 וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נֶכֶד יְהוָה בֵּית־יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנֶשֶׂא
מִנְבֻּעֹת וְנָהָרוּ אֵלָיו כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם:

Isa. 2:2 ὅτι ἔσται ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις ἐμφανὲς τὸ ὄρος κυρίου καὶ ὁ οἶκος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπ' ἄκρων τῶν ὀρέων καὶ ὑψωθήσεται ὑπεράνω τῶν βουνῶν καὶ ἥξουσιν ἐπ' αὐτὸ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη

This alone is not significant. However the fact that the translator of the LXX prophetic material chose the same preposition as LXX Ps. 8:2 for a similar Isaianic Hebrew preposition, and a different separative particle ׀ in Mic. 4:1, points to recognition of commonly themed exaltation material among scribal circles in which the STP mixed. STP may have chosen ὑπεράνω to connect the prophetic messianic hope with the exaltation of King Messiah in Psalm 8: what, after all, does it mean for an eschatological Kingdom to be rulerless and rudderless, if, to the biblical mind, every ancient dominion required a Sovereign King to establish its reign? How natural then, given the Davidic promises, (apparent in Mic. 5 & Isa 9, 55), for STP to distil the messianic hope of a conquering King/Adam already latent in Hebrew Psalm 8.

Two Pentateuchal texts, which both employ the preposition ὑπεράνω cement the case for messianic exegesis, namely Deut. 26:19 & 28:1.

Deut. 26:19 וְלִהְיוֹתָ עַם־קֳדֹשׁ לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר:
אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְתַחֲלָה וְלָשֵׁם וּלְתַפְאֶרֶת

Deut. 26:19 καὶ εἶναί σε ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν ἔθνων ὡς ἐποίησέν σε ὀνομαστὸν καὶ καύχημα καὶ δόξαστόν εἶναί σε λαὸν ἅγιον κυρίῳ τῷ θεῷ σου καθὼς ἐλάλησεν

Deut. 28:1 יהיה אם-שמעו תשמע בקול יהוה אלהיך לשמר לעשות
את-כל-מצוותי אשר אנכי מצוך היום ונחנה יהוה אלהיך עליון על
כל-גווי הארץ:

Deut. 28:1 καὶ ἔσται ὡς ἂν διαβῇτε τὸν Ιορδάνην εἰς τὴν
γῆν ἣν κύριος ὁ θεὸς ὑμῶν δίδωσιν ὑμῖν ἔαν ἀκοῇ
εἰσακούσῃτε τῆς φωνῆς κυρίου τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῶν φυλάσσειν καὶ
ποιεῖν πάσας τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ ἅς ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαί σοι
σήμερον καὶ δώσει σε κύριος ὁ θεός σου ὑπεράνω πάντων
τῶν ἐθνῶν τῆς γῆς

The immediate context of both passages is covenant curse and blessing, which Moses explicates to Israel on the verge of Canaan. Disobedience will lead to imprecation & defeat, while covenant fidelity will result in global dominion and national royal triumph. Interpretation must properly, however, give due weight to the wider Pentateuchal context, which focuses on the messianic promises and Abrahamic Covenant, as Kaiser and Alexander have noted. The choice of this rare preposition of super-exaltation in Ps. 8, the previous utilization of ὑπερανῶ in Deut., and intertextual links with the MT of Isa 2:2 and Mal 4:1, make a cumulative case for messianisation of Psalm 8. STP advances a super-exalted human Davidic descendent as the ultimate answer to the sin problem and divine eschatological ruler, as McConville suggests.⁹⁵ I tentatively suggest that STP intentionally employs deuteronomistic vocabulary and themes to identify national conquest with coming messiah's victory and his subjugation of the nations on behalf of Israel. This theme,

⁹⁵J.G. McConville, *Deuteronomy* (AOTC; Downers Grove/Leicester : IVP, 2002), pp. 382-383, believes that Deu. 26:19 suggests a universalistic eschatological role for Israel exalted among the nations. "The implication of universal salvation is left to other parts of the OT to draw out more fully. The lines from the present passage to Is. 55-66 are most noticeable, because of the vocabulary chain 'praise, name & glory' adopted there in a more scattered way. In that place there is an emphasis on newness ..and a strong sense of Yahweh's praise throughout the world, in language that can be seen as eschatological." We strongly agree: McConville is not the first to pick up on this intertextual thread which was noticed long before by the STP.

illuminatingly, has been picked up in two of the three rare NT uses of this preposition, namely Eph. 1:21 and 4:10, and expounded along the lines we have suggested, as Lincolns notes.⁹⁶

Eph. 1:21 ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς καὶ ἐξουσίας καὶ
δυνάμεως καὶ κυριότητος καὶ παντὸς ὀνόματος
ὀνομαζομένου, οὐ μόνον ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν
τῷ μέλλοντι·

Eph. 4:10 ὁ καταβάς αὐτός ἐστιν καὶ ὁ ἀναβάς ὑπεράνω
πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, ἵνα πληρώσῃ τὰ πάντα.

More work needs to be done on related themes and vocabulary, but this is beyond the scope of this paper.

This view is affirmed in the STP rendition of הָיָה in 2bβ. In LP & STP the imperative form of הָיָה is used on seven occasions (Gen 30:26, 42:37; Num. 11:13, 27:4; Psa. 69:28, 86:16 (MT)). Except on this occasion, it is uniformly rendered by an imperatival form of δίδωμι (five times) or προστιθημι (once). Here the choice of the atypical aorist passive form of ἐπαίρω signals exegetical intent. A plea for redemption through the exaltation of divine glory is replaced by prophetic certainty of future exaltation of David's messianic line.

This accords with the translation of the relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר by the Greek particle ὅτι. Though the relative pronoun occurs ninety-four times in the Hebrew Psalms, it is rendered by STP by ὅτι on only six occasions. Most occurrences are rendered by a relative pronoun, indefinite pronoun, participle, substantive, and less commonly by γὰρ twice, ὥς on a few occasions, a positional particle and once by a preposition. While the STP uses his exegetical discretion to best suit the meaning, ὅτι is not a stock equivalent but a deviation from his normal strict one-to-one morphological correspondence. It is interesting to note also that when ὅτι appears in LPs (Psa. 8:2, 31:7,

⁹⁶ A.T. Lincolns, *Ephesians* (WBC 42; Dallas; Word, 1990), pp. 63-64, 67-68 & 79.

95:4, 95:5, 119:158 & 139:20), it always has a causal sense. This suggests that STP establishes a causal relationship between the praise of Yahweh and exaltation of messiah or a perfect, Davidic, messianic human. However, given the fact that ὅτι occurs some four hundred and one times in the Greek Psalter, caution should be exercised: cursory examination of its occurrences in Psalm 8-9 reveals that it is usually a stock translation for כִּי, being used once as a marker of indirect speech, 9:21, for clear syntactical reasons – this is not the case in 8:2 where a causal interpretation is intended.

This is bolstered by the verb ἐπαίρω which can only be described as a surprising equivalent for הָנִיף. The passive sense is “be lifted up,” “be taken up” or “exaltation to heaven of those who endured.”⁹⁷ Within the biblical canon this verb is generally used absolutely or with a direct object, but when used with an indirect object is followed by the simple dative case or a preposition (Ps. 46:10, 73:3, 74:6, 133:2; Lk 6:20, 18:13; Jn 12:1, 13:18; Acts 1:2; 27:40; 2 Cor 10:5). It is fascinating to discover that on no other occasion is ὑπερανῶ used. While not by itself significant, for the context of super-exaltation itself warrants a strengthened preposition, exegesis is made probable by the fact that, with few exceptions, in other texts where the exaltation of God or the Hebrew preposition הָנִיף is employed, STP chose a stock equivalent ἐπι: ὑπερανῶ in this instance connotes messianic superexaltation. From this perspective Acts 1:2 looks like a veiled reference to the exaltation of Messiah Jesus in terms of Ps. 8:2, though this belongs to reception history.

Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν βλέπόντων αὐτῶν ἐπλήρθη καὶ νεφέλη
ὑπέλαβεν αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν αὐτῶν.

⁹⁷ So F. Reinicker, *A Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament* (trans. C.L. Rogers Jr.; Zondervan; Grand Rapids: 1980), p. 263-264. BAG. TDNT and NIDNTT have no entry for the passive sense. LS’s ‘be roused, excited, elated’ has little bearing on the discussion.

I believe a strong case has been made for messianic exegesis at the verbal level which amounts to phrasal level interpretation, in the choice of preposition and vocabulary of $\nu 2b\alpha-\eta$.

Conclusions

Given the scope and complexity of my task, many unexplored intertextual connections, small sample size, and fragmentary nature of the evidence, this study inevitably suffers from an unsatisfying degree of incompleteness. Since much more could be said on the translation of Ps. 8, any conclusions are necessarily provisional, and open to revision at a later date if evidence so demands.

Firstly a significant body of evidence argues a strong cumulative case for deliberate messianisation of Greek Ps. 8. That the STP did not messianise every verse is exactly what we might expect, and quite in keeping with his default literal method. His nuanced, robust, theology fosters hope in a multi-tasking Messiah, presented as a perfect Davidic King (pp. 26-27) who both embodies Israelite eschatological hope for international super-exaltation and dominance & establishes divine durable reign (p. 24). The Son of Man figure, well known to Daniel readers (pp. 21-22), will defeat God's enemies, trample them in His winepress, as Adam's rightful heir (pp. 18-20) & restore Israelite institutions (pp. 15-16). There is both literal translation and lateral thinking.

Secondly while minimalists like Pietersma reduce exegesis to three levels only, a fairer reading of the evidence unearths messianisation on six to seven levels. Intertestamental, rabbinical, apostolic, and patristic writers bear witness to the success of STP in this respect if indeed this was in mind as he translated the Hebrew Psalter.

Thirdly, there is evidently scope for further study along a number of lines: a 'medialist' commentary on the LXX Psalter, with particular focus on intertextuality, both as a supplement to the minimalist production of Albert Pietersma, and to iron-out the weaknesses in the provocative volume of Schaper, is urgently needed; commentaries on

other books of the LXX would serve as an invaluable tool for research on the Septuagint, Psalter, and messianic & biblical studies more generally; future investigation into messianisation of superscriptions, messianic intertextuality, in depth treatment of individual psalms, and a comprehensive messianic theology of the Greek Psalter, are fields of research which should prove stimulating, fruitful and invaluable. I will be most gratified if this paper stimulates research in any or all of these fields.

Soli Deo Gloria.